

Alexander McCall Smith

Quotes

*Thinking, People, Book, Men, Writing, Sight, World, Character, Love, Fiction,
Mother, Mma, Giving, Beautiful, Life, Want, Joy, Running, Mind, Years*

The telling of a story, like virtually everything in this life, was always made all the easier by a cup of tea.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Be content with who you are and where you are, and do whatever you can do to bring to others such contentment, and joy, and understanding that you have managed to find yourself.

~Alexander McCall Smith

There is room in history for all of us.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Manners are the basic building blocks of civil society.

~Alexander McCall Smith

I see no point in being despondent. We might as well enjoy ourselves during our brief tenure of this life.

~Alexander McCall Smith

How many of us are happy to be exactly where we are at any moment?...only the completely happy think that they are in the correct place.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Talking about pumpkins doesn't make them grow.

~Alexander McCall Smith

We think the world is ours forever, but we are little more than squatters.

~Alexander McCall Smith

There are old mycologists and there are bold mycologists, but there are no old, bold mycologists.

~Alexander McCall Smith

A life without stories would be no life at all. And stories bound us, did they not, one to another, the living to the dead, people to animals, people to the land?

~Alexander McCall Smith

[Edinburgh] is a city of shifting light, of changing skies, of sudden vistas. A city so beautiful it breaks the heart again and again.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Who can't like pigs? They're wonderful creatures! I've always liked pigs.

~Alexander McCall Smith

It is sometimes easier to be happy if you don't know everything.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Do you realise that people die of boredom in London suburbs? It's the second biggest cause of death amongs the English in general. Sheer boredom...

~Alexander McCall Smith

I have always taken the view that one should never hold against a man anything he says after twelve o'clock at night or after a glass or two of anything.

~Alexander McCall Smith

There is plenty of work for love to do.

~Alexander McCall Smith

None of us knows how we will cope with snakes until the moment arises, and then most of us find out that we do not do it very well.

~Alexander McCall Smith

One of the most destructive things that's happening in modern society

is that we are losing our sense of the bonds that bind people together - which can lead to nightmares of social collapse.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Antonia was very conscious of the corrosive power of envy and felt that it was this emotion, more than any other, which lay behind human unhappiness. People did not realize how widespread envy was.

~Alexander McCall Smith

She was made for untidy rooms and rumpled beds.

~Alexander McCall Smith

We should be careful of the insults we fling at others, lest they return and land at our feet, newly minted to apply to those who had first coined them.

~Alexander McCall Smith

I'm interested in character and dialogue and exchange of ideas.

~Alexander McCall Smith

There are many women whose lives would be immeasurably improved by widowhood, but one should not always point that out.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Dating is really all about sex. In the conventional context, this means that the man invites the woman to go through a social encounter, the ultimate purpose of which is sexual engagement.

~Alexander McCall Smith

As a writer I've learned certain lessons. One of them is to be careful about how you put a view, and to bear in mind how easily and readily you'll be misinterpreted.

~Alexander McCall Smith

A very powerful theme in fiction is that of loss.

~Alexander McCall Smith

We are all tempted, Mma. We are all tempted when it comes to cake.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Well, I'd say all of us are a combination of moods and emotions. In my day to day life I don't go around skipping, but at times one can feel sheer exhilarating joy at the world.

~Alexander McCall Smith

It's through the small things that we develop our moral imagination, so that we can understand the sufferings of others.

~Alexander McCall Smith

The point about love, the essential point, was that we loved what we loved. We did not choose. We just loved.

~Alexander McCall Smith

It seems to me that we're in danger of losing sight of certain basic civic values in society by allowing the growth of a whole generation of people who really have no sense of attachment to society.

~Alexander McCall Smith

That of all people, it should be him; that took her aback. That the heart should settle on somebody like him; that surprised her. But she was so certain about it, so certain.

~Alexander McCall Smith

I've also long since realized that the way to really engage children is to give out prizes; it's amazing how it concentrates their minds.

~Alexander McCall Smith

If your ceiling should fall down, then you have lost a room, but gained a

courtyard. Think of it that way.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Everything has been something before.

~Alexander McCall Smith

We all know that it is women who take the decisions, but we have to let men think that the decisions are theirs. It is an act of kindness on the part of women.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Our minds can come up with the most entertaining possibilities, if we let them. But most of the time, we keep them under far too close a check.

~Alexander McCall Smith

There was a distinction between lying and telling half-truths, but it was a very narrow one.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Self-pity does not appreciate pedantry.

~Alexander McCall Smith

International business, once allowed to stalk uncontrolled, killed the local, the small, the quirky.

~Alexander McCall Smith

It was easy to be moral when that was the way you felt anyway. The hard bit about morality was making yourself feel the opposite of what you really felt.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Writers obviously have to bear witness to the harsh face of the age.

~Alexander McCall Smith

To lose a child ... was something that could end one's world. One could never get back to how it was before. The stars went out. The moon disappeared. The birds became silent.

~Alexander McCall Smith

That my philosophy of life is, as far as possible, one of enjoyment. I'm not nihilistic.

~Alexander McCall Smith

If you lose sight of the smaller accomplishments , you end up with an imbalance in your life.

~Alexander McCall Smith

I cannot see myself in a new car. I am a tiny white van person. That is what i want!

~Alexander McCall Smith

But don't we often lie to people we love, or not tell them things, precisely because we love them?

~Alexander McCall Smith

Each of us is born into our own mysteries but the mystery of another might just take us in and embrace us. And then what a sense of homecoming, of belonging!

~Alexander McCall Smith

I'm very interested in tea. I wouldn't mind being involved in some aspect of the tea industry.

~Alexander McCall Smith

I am just a tiny person in Africa, but there is a place for me, and for everybody, to sit down on this earth and touch it and call it their own.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Botswana is actually very peaceful. It's democratic. It never was in debt. They've been fortunate, they've had diamonds.

~Alexander McCall Smith

I just focus on getting the first scene right, with a few lines about the overall plot, and then the book grows organically.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Do not take on a traditionally built person unless you are prepared for a heavyweight bout.

~Alexander McCall Smith

My parents were very supportive and always encouraged us. My father was a gentle, nice man. My mother was quite a colourful character and a keen reader who encouraged me to write.

~Alexander McCall Smith

The Okavango Delta is an astonishing sight: the great Okavango River, rather than flow towards the sea, flows inland, into the sands of the Kalahari.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Painters aren't expected to paint bleak pictures, are they?

~Alexander McCall Smith

I am easily persuaded to continue to have fun.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Many of my books are written from a female perspective. I rather enjoy the take that women have on the world, and certainly I enjoy the conversations that women have.

~Alexander McCall Smith

The previously unloved may find it hard to believe that they are now

loved; that is such a miracle, they feel; such a miracle.

~Alexander McCall Smith

I've always had a creative urge and I get immense satisfaction from creating something because it feels like I'm making sense of the world and imposing order on it.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Ritual is a terribly important, binding cement in a society. If we abandon formality and rituals, we're actually weakening the relationships that exist between people that bind.

~Alexander McCall Smith

It's a different sort of love taht puts up with illness. Old love.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Edinburgh used to be a haughty city.

~Alexander McCall Smith

New York is a wonderful place to be up, an awful place to be down.

~Alexander McCall Smith

I have three older sisters, so we were a reasonably large family and, in general, a happy one.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Simple questions--and simple answers--were what we needed in life. That was what Mma Ramotswe believed. Yes.

~Alexander McCall Smith

I am often thanked by people for inventing the term traditionally built. The people who give me thanks for this are often traditionally built themselves.

~Alexander McCall Smith

And that, in a way, was the burden of being a philosopher: one knew what one had to do, but it was so often the opposite of what one really wanted to do.

~Alexander McCall Smith

When you allow people to do what they wish, then that is what they do. They stop doing the things they need to do.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Dogs are in on our human silliness; lions are not.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Lou knew that joy unshared was a halved emotion, just as sadness and loss, when borne alone, were often doubled.

~Alexander McCall Smith

It would be wonderful to have a guru; it would be like having a social worker or a personal trainer, not that people who had either of these necessarily appreciated the advice they received.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Small things may be important to us; to be a sometime anything is sometimes something.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Everybody has friends they dislike; people who they have slipped into relationships with, people they would not have chosen had they been more cautious, more circumspect.

~Alexander McCall Smith

But you cannot expect every writer to dwell on human suffering. I think my books do deal with grave issues. People who say they are too positive probably havent read them.

~Alexander McCall Smith

As a writer, you have to realize that people want to like the characters, so you have to be careful to keep them involved.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Any author of fiction will tell you that characters don't need to be told what to do.

~Alexander McCall Smith

At night we are all strangers, even to ourselves.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Oh I love gadgets and I pride myself on keeping at the cutting edge of technology.

~Alexander McCall Smith

I would certainly never consider myself a Renaissance Man; I'm not fit to look at the dust from the chariot wheels of many of those who have gone before me.

~Alexander McCall Smith

As a writer, I have readers who will have a range of political views. I don't think they look to me for political guidance.

~Alexander McCall Smith

I am capable of being idle.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Life consists of positive and negative features, and I think that it is permissible to write about both.

~Alexander McCall Smith

I enjoy women's conversation, and I think that helps me to describe them in fiction.

~Alexander McCall Smith

I write four or five a books a year. That means that I usually have one on the go. I am fortunate in being able to write quickly - 1000 words an hour.

~Alexander McCall Smith

Some of my characters are a mixture of various aspects of people I have met. others are pure invention.

~Alexander McCall Smith

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