

Ben Okri Quotes

*Dream, Stories, People, Writing, World, Art, Reality, Destiny, Fighting, Rivers,
Secret, Reading, Heart, Real, Beautiful, Artist, Mean, Men, Past, Silence*

The most authentic thing about us is our capacity to create, to overcome, to endure, to transform, to love and to be greater than our suffering.

~Ben Okri

The magician and the politician have much in common: they both have to draw our attention away from what they are really doing.

~Ben Okri

We have not yet arrived, but every point at which we stop requires a re-definition of our destination.

~Ben Okri

We have fallen into this very mean description of humanity. Naturalism in fiction is too reductive in its definition of human beings.

~Ben Okri

When you can imagine you begin to create and when you begin to create you realize that you can create a world that you prefer to live in, rather than a world that you're suffering in.

~Ben Okri

Beware of the stories you read or tell; subtly, at night, beneath the waters of consciousness, they are altering your world.

~Ben Okri

There ought to be three traditions in the art of humanity: the realistic, the visionary and the wild.

~Ben Okri

Stories are the secret reservoir of values: change the stories individuals and nations live by and tell themselves, and you change the individuals and nations.

~Ben Okri

The law is simple. Every experience is repeated or suffered till you experience it properly and fully the first time.

~Ben Okri

What you see is what you make. What you see in a people is what you eventually create in them.

~Ben Okri

The fact of storytelling hints at a fundamental human unease, hints at human imperfection. Where there is perfection there is no story to tell.

~Ben Okri

Don't despair too much if you see beautiful things destroyed, if you see them perish. Because the best things are always growing in secret.

~Ben Okri

A man's greatest battles are the ones he fights within himself.

~Ben Okri

I'm fascinated by the mysterious element that runs through our lives. Everyone is looking out of the world through their emotion and history. Nobody has an absolute reality.

~Ben Okri

The strange thing about Africa is how past, present and future come together in a kind of rough jazz, if you like.

~Ben Okri

This is what you must be like. Grow wherever life puts you down.

~Ben Okri

Stories can conquer fear, you know. They can make the heart bigger.

~Ben Okri

We can redream this world and make the dream come real. Human beings are gods hidden from themselves.

~Ben Okri

I held you in the square And felt the evening Re-order itself around Your smile.

~Ben Okri

Reading, like writing, is a creative act. If readers only bring a narrow range of themselves to the book, then they'll only see their narrow range reflected in it.

~Ben Okri

Creativity is the art of the impossible

~Ben Okri

Magic becomes art when it has nothing to hide.

~Ben Okri

In the beginning there was a river. The river became a road and the road branched out to the whole world. And because the road was once a river it was always hungry.

~Ben Okri

Maybe there are only three kinds of stories: those we live, those we tell, and those that help our souls fly upwards to a greater life.

~Ben Okri

Wholeness is the enemy of the artist. We ought to be broken, ruined in some way.

~Ben Okri

Ghetto-dwellers are the great fantasists. There was an extraordinary vibrancy there, an imaginative life. When you are that poor, all you've

got left is your belief in the imagination.

~Ben Okri

To sustain your belief through situations that completely undermine it is quite something.

~Ben Okri

An inner darkness is darker than an outer darkness.

~Ben Okri

Without stories we would go mad. Life would lose its moorings or lose its orientations. even in silence we are living our stories

~Ben Okri

Destiny plans a different route and fulfills the dream in ways we couldn't have expected.

~Ben Okri

I lived rough, by my wits, was homeless, lived on the streets, lived on friends' floors, was happy, was miserable.

~Ben Okri

I am not fighting for success, just to get more beauty out of myself and share it with more people.

~Ben Okri

We can still astonish the gods in humanity
And be the stuff of future legends,
If we but dare to be real,
And have the courage to see
That this is the time to dream
The best dream of them all.

~Ben Okri

The greatest religions convert the world through stories.

~Ben Okri

One of the greatest gifts my father gave me - unintentionally - was witnessing the courage with which he bore adversity.

~Ben Okri

a dream can be the highest point of a life

~Ben Okri

Painters ought to be mute. Speech is the enemy of expression.

~Ben Okri

The higher the artist, the fewer the gestures. The fewer the tools, the greater the imagination. The greater the will, the greater the secret failure.

~Ben Okri

I went to London because, for me, it was the home of literature. I went there because of Dickens and Shakespeare.

~Ben Okri

The best writing is not about the writer, the best writing is absolutely not about the writer, it's about us, it's about the reader.

~Ben Okri

To see the madness and yet walk a perfect silver line. ... That's what the true story-teller should be: a great guide, a clear mind, who can walk a silver line in hell or madness.

~Ben Okri

If we could be pure dancers in spirit we would never be afraid to love, and we would love with strength and wisdom.

~Ben Okri

If we are true, if we can love, if we have vision, if we can have courage, we can, we should, we ought to, we will.

~Ben Okri

I was going to be a scientist.

~Ben Okri

Don't read what everyone else is reading. Check them out later, cautiously.

~Ben Okri

If you are working in an office, where do you find the time to write a novel? But you can finish a short story in five pages. Furthermore, a short story is a perfect place to learn the craft

~Ben Okri

People are as healthy and confident as the stories they tell themselves.

~Ben Okri

I learned that life will go through changes - up and down and up again. It's what life does.

~Ben Okri

When chaos is the god of an era, clamorous music is the deity's chief instrument.

~Ben Okri

A man must be able to hold his drink because drunkenness is sometimes necessary in this difficult life.

~Ben Okri

I know that human beings are capable of anything.

~Ben Okri

Who knows, maybe this whole planet is an asylum, a penal realm. A

place for hard cases.

~Ben Okri

To anyone who is homeless, I say, find a home.

~Ben Okri

We are living in enchanted time. With our spirits right.

~Ben Okri

When you stop inventing reality then you see things as they really are.

~Ben Okri

Don't neglect the gold in your own back yard.

~Ben Okri

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- Reading Quotes
- Heart Quotes
- Real Quotes
- Beautiful Quotes
- Artist Quotes
- Mean Quotes
- Men Quotes
- Past Quotes
- Silence Quotes