

Charles Baxter

Quotes

*Writing, Stories, Mistake, Real, Mean, Book, Literature, Character, Details,
Trying, Want, Long, People, Thinking, Two, Midwest, Degrees, Mother,
Weirdness, Pain*

When you're in love you don't have to do a damn thing. You can just be. You can just stay quiet in the world. You don't have to move an inch.

~Charles Baxter

As my mother once said to me, "They're quite crazy, dear - men are. What you look for is one of them whose insanity is large enough, and calm and generous enough, to include you."

~Charles Baxter

Forget art. Put your trust in ice cream.

~Charles Baxter

Needing something is not the same thing as being interested in the thing itself.

~Charles Baxter

In truth, there are only two realities: the one for people who are in love or love each other, and the one for people who are standing outside all that.

~Charles Baxter

You are a real find and you keep me satisfied, up to a point. After all, I'm a malcontent and you can't change that.

~Charles Baxter

Gainfully unemployed, very proud of it, too.

~Charles Baxter

If you want to see the consequences of ideas, write a story. If you want to see the consequences of belief, write a story in which somebody is acting on the ideas or beliefs that she has.

~Charles Baxter

A novel is not a summary of its plot but a collection of instances, of luminous specific details that take us in the direction of the unsaid and unseen.

~Charles Baxter

There is no weather in malls.

~Charles Baxter

When I'm writing, I'm waiting to see somebody, and I'm waiting to hear them. It's almost like conjuring spirits out of the air, using your own imaginative instability.

~Charles Baxter

When all the details fit in perfectly, something is probably wrong with the story.

~Charles Baxter

At least with pets, and for all I know, people too, intelligence and quick-wittedness have nothing to do with a talent for being loved, or being kind, nothing at all, less than nothing.

~Charles Baxter

I prefer short stories, but publishers would, of course, rather that writers produce novels, since novels are still more commercially viable.

~Charles Baxter

What a midwesterner he was, a thoroughly unhip guy with his heart in the usual place, on the sleeve, in plain sight.

~Charles Baxter

Try to get your characters into interesting trouble. Allow your characters to misbehave. Let them stay out after 11.

~Charles Baxter

Short story characters, mine anyway, are usually driven by impulse, not so much by their histories and the choices that they have to make.

~Charles Baxter

Everybody should customize their names.

~Charles Baxter

As the poet says, all happy couples are alike, it's the unhappy ones who create the stories. I'm no longer a story. Happiness has made me fade into real life.

~Charles Baxter

Literature is not a sack race. There aren't real winners and losers in the Republic of Letters.

~Charles Baxter

At its best, fiction is not a diversion but a means of knowing the world.

~Charles Baxter

I don't think that most women have to prove that they're real women. You live long enough, you graduate to being real.

~Charles Baxter

When blame has been assigned, the story is over.

~Charles Baxter

Savor the imminent weirdness of the day.

~Charles Baxter

It's my feeling that any writer can get an emotion into a story without being sentimental as long as the emotion is dealt with honestly, with sufficient clarity, and detail.

~Charles Baxter

Literature is not an instruction manual.

~Charles Baxter

The worst mistakes I've made have been the ones directed by sweet-natured hopefulness.

~Charles Baxter

You know, there's something heartsick about parties like this. Look at us. We're all pretending to be smart, as if intelligence were the cure for our anguish.

~Charles Baxter

Because it is the Midwest, no one really glitters because no one has to, it's more of a dull shine, like frequently used silverware.

~Charles Baxter

Before, I was always trying to make my relationships work by means of willpower and forced affability. This time I didn't have to strive for anything. A quality of ease spread over us.

~Charles Baxter

The point is that although love may die, what is said on its behalf cannot be consumed by the passage of time, and forgiveness is everything.

~Charles Baxter

You think that what I've told you is an anecdote. But really it isn't. It's my whole life. It's the only story I have.

~Charles Baxter

There is such a thing as the poetry of a mistake, and when you say, "Mistakes were made," you deprive an action of its poetry, and you sound like a weasel.

~Charles Baxter

There's nothing to talk about to strangers anymore, if you know what I mean. Everything I want to say, I say to her.

~Charles Baxter

My God, the corruptions of literature. It put all these notions into our heads.

~Charles Baxter

I feel quite at home writing short stories but nervous and anxious when writing novels, as if the bad time of consecutive failures might arise again.

~Charles Baxter

The truth is that I'm never sure how any of my books will be received, and because I can be thin-skinned, I try not to read too many reviews when a book first comes out.

~Charles Baxter

When readers don't like the book, it's usually because they feel that romantic love is pass or somehow needs more irony.

~Charles Baxter

It's better to be nominated for awards than not to be nominated for them, but of course to some degree such awards [National Book Award] are always subjective.

~Charles Baxter

[T]he astonishing purity of pain, how it will not be mixed with any other sensation.

~Charles Baxter

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