

Czeslaw Milosz

Quotes

Men, People, Thinking, Book, Running, Country, Philosophy, World, Earth, Spring, Art, Believe, Night, Mean, Years, Taken, Deeds, Voice, Ends, Rivers

In a room where people unanimously maintain a conspiracy of silence, one word of truth sounds like a pistol shot.

~Czeslaw Milosz

The living owe it to those who no longer can speak to tell their story for them.

~Czeslaw Milosz

The voice of passion is better than the voice of reason. The passionless cannot change history.

~Czeslaw Milosz

The purpose of poetry is to remind us how difficult it is to remain just one person, for our house is open, there are no keys in the doors, and invisible guests come in and out at will.

~Czeslaw Milosz

The soul exceeds its circumstances.

~Czeslaw Milosz

Consolation Calm down. Both your sins and your good deeds will be lost in oblivion.

~Czeslaw Milosz

Not that I want to be a god or a hero. Just to change into a tree, grow for ages, not hurt anyone.

~Czeslaw Milosz

Do not feel safe. The poet remembers. You can kill one, but another is born. The words are written down, the deed, the date.

~Czeslaw Milosz

When a writer is born into a family, the family is finished.

~Czeslaw Milosz

The history of my stupidity would fill many volumes.

~Czeslaw Milosz

I am composed of contradictions, which is why poetry is a better form for me than philosophy

~Czeslaw Milosz

A true opium of the people is a belief in nothingness after death - the huge solace of thinking that for our betrayals, greed, cowardice, murders we are not going to be judged.

~Czeslaw Milosz

Language is the only homeland.

~Czeslaw Milosz

The true enemy of man is generalization.

~Czeslaw Milosz

The purpose of poetry is to remind us / how difficult it is to remain just one person.

~Czeslaw Milosz

Be young forever, seasons of the earth.

~Czeslaw Milosz

Men will clutch at illusions when they have nothing else to hold to.

~Czeslaw Milosz

What has no shadow has no strength to live.

~Czeslaw Milosz

The death of a man is like the fall of a mighty nation
That had valiant armies, captains, and prophets,
And wealthy ports and ships all over the seas.

~Czeslaw Milosz

At every sunrise I renounce the doubts of night and greet the new day of a most precious delusion.

~Czeslaw Milosz

A true opium of the people is a belief in nothingness after death.

~Czeslaw Milosz

A day so happy. Fog lifted early. I worked in the garden. Hummingbirds were stopping over honeysuckle flowers. There was no thing on earth I wanted to possess. I know no one worth my envying him.

~Czeslaw Milosz

Forget the suffering You caused others. Forget the suffering Others caused you. The waters run and run, Springs sparkle and are done, You walk the earth you are forgetting.

~Czeslaw Milosz

I imagine the earth when I am no more: Women's dresses, dewy lilacs, a song in the valley. Yet the books will be there on the shelves, well born, Derived from people, but also from radiance, heights.

~Czeslaw Milosz

A man should not love the moon. An ax should not lose weight in his hand. His garden should smell of rotting apples, And grow a fair amount of nettles.

~Czeslaw Milosz

They used to pour millet on graves or poppy seeds To feed the dead who would come disguised as birds. I put this book here for you, who once lived So that you should visit us no more.

~Czeslaw Milosz

What is poetry which does not save nations or people?

~Czeslaw Milosz

Two attributes of a poet, avidity of the eye and the desire to describe that which he sees.

~Czeslaw Milosz

Poetry is news brought to the mountains by a unicorn and an echo.

~Czeslaw Milosz

The revolt against one's environment is usually 'shame' of one's environment.

~Czeslaw Milosz

I've always regretted that I'm made of contradictions. But, if contradiction is impossible to overcome, we have to accept both its ends.

~Czeslaw Milosz

Do you know how it is when one wakes at night suddenly and asks, listening to the pounding heart: what more do you want, insatiable?

~Czeslaw Milosz

I was left behind with the immensity of existing things. A sponge, suffering because it cannot saturate itself; a river, suffering because reflections of clouds and trees are not clouds and trees.

~Czeslaw Milosz

Grow your tree of falsehood from a small grain of truth.

~Czeslaw Milosz

I think that I am here, on this earth, to present a report on it, but to whom I don't know. As if I were sent so that whatever takes place has meaning because it changes into memory.

~Czeslaw Milosz

When I die, I will see the lining of the world. The other side, beyond bird, mountain, sunset.

~Czeslaw Milosz

It is impossible to communicate to people who have not experienced it the undefinable menace of total rationalism.

~Czeslaw Milosz

Love means to look at yourself The way one looks at distant things For you are only one thing among many.

~Czeslaw Milosz

We have become indifferent to content, and react, not even to form, but to technique, to technical efficiency itself.

~Czeslaw Milosz

You who think of us: they lived only in delusion... Know that we the People of the Book, will never die!

~Czeslaw Milosz

Our memory is childish and it saves only what we need.

~Czeslaw Milosz

The child who dwells inside us trusts that there are wise men somewhere who know the truth.

~Czeslaw Milosz

If I am all mankind, are they themselves without me?

~Czeslaw Milosz

You see how I try To reach with words What matters most And how I fail.

~Czeslaw Milosz

All of us yearn for the highest wisdom, but we have to rely on ourselves in the end.

~Czeslaw Milosz

Poetry is a dividend from what you know and what you are.

~Czeslaw Milosz

Learning To believe you are magnificent. And gradually to discover that you are not magnificent. Enough labor for one human life.

~Czeslaw Milosz

It is sweet to think I was a companion in an expedition that never ends

~Czeslaw Milosz

Irony is the glory of slaves.

~Czeslaw Milosz

I liked beaches, swimming pools, and clinics for there they were the bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh. I pitied them and myself, but this will not protect me. The word and the thought are over.

~Czeslaw Milosz

Consciousness even in my sleep changes primary colors. The features of my face melt like a wax doll in the fire. And who can consent to see in the mirror the mere face of man?

~Czeslaw Milosz

I have no wisdom, no skills, and no faith but I received strength, it tears the world apart. I shall break, a heavy wave, against its shores and a young wave will cover my trace.

~Czeslaw Milosz

For a country without a past is nothing, a word That, hardly spoken,
loses its meaning, A perishable wall destroyed by flame, An echo of
animal emotions.

~Czeslaw Milosz

I knew that I would speak in the language of the vanquished No more
durable than old customs, family rituals, Christmas tinsel, and once a
year the hilarity of carols.

~Czeslaw Milosz

When I curse Fate, it's not me, but the earth in me.

~Czeslaw Milosz

I am not my own friend. Time cuts me in two.

~Czeslaw Milosz

From life, from the apple cut by the flaming knife, what grain will be
saved? My son, believe me, nothing remains, Only adult toil, the furrow
of fate in the palm. Only toil, Nothing more.

~Czeslaw Milosz

All was taken away from you: white dresses, wings, even existence.

~Czeslaw Milosz

What is this enigmatic impulse that does not allow one to settle down in
the achieved, the finished? I think it is a quest for reality.

~Czeslaw Milosz

And now I am ready to keep running When the sun rises beyond the
borderlands of death. I already see mountain ridges in the heavenly
forest Where, beyond every essence, a new essence awaits.

~Czeslaw Milosz

It's true that what is morbid is highly valued today, and so you may

think that I am only joking or that I've devised just one more means of praising Art with the help of irony.

~Czeslaw Milosz

A weak human mercy walks in the corridors of hospitals and is like a half-thawed winter.

~Czeslaw Milosz

And if there is no lining to the world? If a thrush on a branch is not a sign, But just a thrush on the branch? If night and day Make no sense following each other?

~Czeslaw Milosz

I have defined poetry as a 'passionate pursuit of the Real.

~Czeslaw Milosz

Yet falling in love is not the same as being able to love.

~Czeslaw Milosz

On the day the world ends A bee circles a clover, A fisherman mends a glimmering net.

~Czeslaw Milosz

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- Night Quotes
- Mean Quotes
- Years Quotes
- Taken Quotes
- Deeds Quotes
- Voice Quotes
- Ends Quotes
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