

# Donna Tartt

## Quotes

*Thinking, Writing, Literature, Book, Long, People, Beautiful, Heart, Children, Hands, World, Lying, Way, Reality, Might, Character, Years, Want, Girl, Gone*

When you feel homesick,' he said, 'just look up. Because the moon is the same wherever you go.

~Donna Tartt

Beauty is terror. Whatever we call beautiful, we quiver before it.

~Donna Tartt

The books I loved in childhood - the first loves - I've read so often that I've internalized them in some really essential way: they are more inside me now than out.

~Donna Tartt

The Little Friend is a long book. It's also completely different from my first novel: different landscape, different characters, different use of language and diction, different approach to story.

~Donna Tartt

Sometimes you can do all the right things and not succeed. And that's a hard lesson of reality.

~Donna Tartt

Taking on challenging projects is the way that one grows and extends one's range as a writer, one's technical command, so I consider the time well-spent

~Donna Tartt

It is better to know one book intimately than a hundred superficially.

~Donna Tartt

I believe, in a funny way, the job of the novelist is to be out there on the fringes and speaking for an experience that has not really been spoken for.

~Donna Tartt

Does such a thing as "the fatal flaw," that showy dark crack running down the middle of a life, exist outside literature?

~Donna Tartt

Criticism at the wrong time, even if it's legitimate criticism, can be seriously damaging and make the writer lose faith in what he's doing. It's the timing that's all-important.

~Donna Tartt

Everything takes me longer than I expect. It's the sad truth about life

~Donna Tartt

Sometimes we want what we want even if we know it's going to kill us.

~Donna Tartt

There is nothing wrong with the love of Beauty. But Beauty-unless she is wed to something more meaningful-is always superficial

~Donna Tartt

After all, the appeal to stop being yourself, even for a little while, is very great

~Donna Tartt

To really be centered and to really work well and to think about the kinds of things that I need to think about, I need to spend large amounts of time alone.

~Donna Tartt

The storytelling gift is innate: one has it or one doesn't. But style is at least partly a learned thing: one refines it by looking and listening and reading and practice - by work.

~Donna Tartt

As much fun as it is to read a book, writing a book is one level deeper

than that.

~Donna Tartt

Sometimes it's about playing a poor hand well.

~Donna Tartt

I had the epiphany that laughter was light, and light was laughter, and that this was the secret of the universe.

~Donna Tartt

On the other hand, I mean, that is what writers have always been supposed to do, was to rely on their own devices and to - I mean, writing is a lonely business.

~Donna Tartt

If I'm not working, I'm not happy. That's it. That's the prerequisite for me for happiness.

~Donna Tartt

All those layers of silence upon silence.

~Donna Tartt

Children have very sharp powers of observation - probably sharper than adults - yet at the same time their emotional reactions are murky and much more primitive.

~Donna Tartt

I just finished writing an essay about William Maxwell, an American writer whose work I admire very much.

~Donna Tartt

There's an expectation these days that novels - like any other consumer product - should be made on a production line, with one dropping from the conveyor belt every couple of years.

~Donna Tartt

Death is the mother of beauty," said Henry. "And what is beauty?" "Terror."

~Donna Tartt

Storytelling and elegant style don't always go hand in hand.

~Donna Tartt

I think innocence is something that adults project upon children that's not really there.

~Donna Tartt

I'd rather write one good book than ten mediocre ones.

~Donna Tartt

But it's for every writer to decide his own pace, and the pace varies with the writer and the work

~Donna Tartt

So I'm not a Southern writer in the commonly held sense of the term, like Faulkner or Eudora Welty, who took the South for their entire literary environment and subject matter.

~Donna Tartt

My novels aren't really generated by a single conceptual spark; it's more a process of many different elements that come together unexpectedly over a long period of time.

~Donna Tartt

Well, I do have some maiden aunts that are not quite like the aunts in the book, but I definitely do have a couple of them, and a couple of old aunties.

~Donna Tartt

Any action, in the fullness of time, sinks to nothingness.

~Donna Tartt

When I'm writing, I am concentrating almost wholly on concrete detail: the color a room is painted, the way a drop of water rolls off a wet leaf after a rain.

~Donna Tartt

Beauty is rarely soft or consolatory. Quite the contrary. Genuine beauty is always quite alarming.

~Donna Tartt

The snow in the mountains was melting and Bunny had been dead for several weeks before we came to understand the gravity of our situation.

~Donna Tartt

I love the tradition of Dickens, where even the most minor walk-on characters are twitching and particular and alive.

~Donna Tartt

Children love secret club houses. They love secrecy even when there's no need for secrecy

~Donna Tartt

It's hard for me to show work while I'm writing, because other people's comments will influence what happens.

~Donna Tartt

Stay away from the ones you love too much. Those are the ones who will kill you.

~Donna Tartt

Who was it said that coincidence was just God's way of remaining

anonymous?

~Donna Tartt

The job of the novelist is to invent: to embroider, to color, to embellish, to entertain, to make things up. The art of what I do lies not in research or even recollection but primarily in invention.

~Donna Tartt

I've written only two novels, but they're both long ones, and they each took a decade to write.

~Donna Tartt

And as we leave Donne and Walton on the shores of Metahemeralism, we wave a fond farewell to those famous chums of yore.

~Donna Tartt

In short: I felt my existence was tainted, in some subtle but essential way.

~Donna Tartt

...as we rise from the organic and sink back ignominiously into the organic, it is a glory and a privilege to love what Death doesn't touch.

~Donna Tartt

But romantic vision can also lead one away from certain very hard, ugly truths about life that are important to know.

~Donna Tartt

I suppose the shock of recognition is one of the nastiest shocks of all.

~Donna Tartt

Actually, I enjoy the process of writing a big long novel.

~Donna Tartt

You are - all your experience just kind of accumulates, and the novel takes a richness of its own simply because it has the weight of all those years that one's put into it.

~Donna Tartt

I suppose at one time in my life I might have had any number of stories, but now there is no other. This is the only story I will ever be able to tell.

~Donna Tartt

In order for a long piece of work to engage a novelist over an extended period of time, it has to deal with questions that you find very important, that you're trying to work out.

~Donna Tartt

I'm not sure why I've been drawn to this subject, except that murder is a subject that has always drawn people for as long as people have been telling stories.

~Donna Tartt

I hope we're all ready to leave the phenomenal world, and enter into the sublime?

~Donna Tartt

I think it's hard to write about children and to have an idea of innocence.

~Donna Tartt

The trouble is when people read about authors, they don't feel compelled to read the authors' work.

~Donna Tartt

Children - if you think back really what it was like to be a child and what it was like to know other children - children lie all the time



~Donna Tartt

Character, to me, is the life's blood of fiction

~Donna Tartt

I guess that anything we manage to save from history is a miracle.

~Donna Tartt

No money, holes in my socks, living off oatmeal.

~Donna Tartt

Love doesn't conquer everything. And whoever thinks it does is a fool.

~Donna Tartt

There's nothing like having a sympathetic reader who asks the right questions, who understands what you're trying to achieve and only wants to make it better.

~Donna Tartt

There's a big anti-intellectual strain in the American south, and there always has been. We're not big on thought.

~Donna Tartt

I really do work in solitude.

~Donna Tartt

"Are you happy here?" I said at last. He considered this for a moment. "Not particularly," he said. "But you're not very happy where you are, either."

~Donna Tartt

To understand the world at all, sometimes you could only focus on a tiny bit of it, look very hard at what was close to hand and make it stand in for the whole.

~Donna Tartt

...with a grief no less sharp for not being intimate with its object.

~Donna Tartt

Anything is grand if it's done on a large enough scale.

~Donna Tartt

Always remember, the person we're really working for is the person who's restoring the piece a hundred years from now. He's the one we want to impress.

~Donna Tartt

Well, I think storytellers have always found murder a fascinating device.

~Donna Tartt

I began to see new buildings, too, which were connected by futuristic walkways lit from beneath. Long, cool perspectives of modern architecture, rising phosphorescent and eerie from the rubble.

~Donna Tartt

Who cares? If he is good to you? None of us ever find enough kindness in the world, do we?

~Donna Tartt

Beauty alters the grain of reality.

~Donna Tartt

Still when I lost her, I lost sight of any landmark that might have led me someplace happier, to some more populated or congenial life.

~Donna Tartt

Not quite what one expected, but once it happened one realized it

couldn't be any other way.

~Donna Tartt

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