

E. M. Forster

Quotes

Men, Literature, People, Thinking, Character, Writing, Believe, Book, Long, Life, Room With A View, Love, Two, Passion, Running, Art, World, Children, Mean, Mind

We must be willing to let go of the life we have planned, so as to have the life that is waiting for us.

~E. M. Forster

One person with passion is better than forty people merely interested.

~E. M. Forster

Railway termini are our gates to the glorious and the unknown

~E. M. Forster

Railway termini are our gates to the glorious and the unknown. Through them we pass out into adventure and sunshine, to them, alas! we return.

~E. M. Forster

I am sure that if the mothers of various nations could meet, there would be no more wars.

~E. M. Forster

Ideas are fatal to caste.

~E. M. Forster

Pathos, piety, courage, they exist, but are identical, and so is filth. Everything exists, nothing has value.

~E. M. Forster

The main facts in human life are five: birth, food, sleep, love and death.

~E. M. Forster

One always tends to overpraise a long book, because one has got through it.

~E. M. Forster

Works of art, in my opinion, are the only objects in the material universe

to possess internal order, and that is why, though I don't believe that only art matters, I do believe in Art for Art's sake.

~E. M. Forster

One must be fond of people and trust them if one is not to make a mess of life.

~E. M. Forster

Outside the arch, always there seemed another arch. And beyond the remotest echo, a silence.

~E. M. Forster

Spoon feeding in the long run teaches us nothing but the shape of the spoon.

~E. M. Forster

Life never gives us what we want at the moment that we consider appropriate.

~E. M. Forster

If I had to choose between betraying my country and betraying my friend, I hope I should have the guts to betray my country.

~E. M. Forster

What is the good of your stars and trees, your sunrise and the wind, if they do not enter into our daily lives?

~E. M. Forster

Unless we remember we cannot understand.

~E. M. Forster

You confuse what's important with what's impressive.

~E. M. Forster

Life is a public performance on the violin, in which you must learn the instrument as you go along.

~E. M. Forster

The fact is we can only love what we know personally. And we cannot know much. In public affairs, in the rebuilding of civilization, something less dramatic and emotional is needed, namely tolerance.

~E. M. Forster

How can I know what I think till I see what I say?

~E. M. Forster

Men yearn for poetry though they may not confess it; they desire that joy shall be graceful and sorrow august and infinity have a form.

~E. M. Forster

Charm, in most men and nearly all women, is a decoration.

~E. M. Forster

A facade of skyscrapers facing a lake and behind the facade, every type of dubiousness.

~E. M. Forster

Aziz winked at him slowly and said: "There are many ways of being a man; mine is to express what is deepest in my heart."

~E. M. Forster

Oxford is Oxford: not a mere receptacle for youth, like Cambridge. Perhaps it wants its inmates to love it rather than to love one another.

~E. M. Forster

Human relations are impossible. When they are real they are uncomfortable, and when they are comfortable they are unreal. It was for the journey into solitude that the human soul was created.

~E. M. Forster

My conviction gains infinitely the moment another soul will believe in it.

~E. M. Forster

At night, when the curtains are drawn and the fire flickers, my books attain a collective dignity.

~E. M. Forster

Nonsense and beauty have close connections.

~E. M. Forster

What is wonderful about great literature is that it transforms the man who reads it towards the condition of the man who wrote.

~E. M. Forster

Mistrust all enterprises that require new clothes.

~E. M. Forster

It makes a difference doesn't it, whether we fully fence ourselves in, or whether we are fenced out by the barriers of others?

~E. M. Forster

Logic! Good gracious! What rubbish!

~E. M. Forster

The armour of falsehood is subtly wrought out of darkness, and hides a man not only from others, but from his own soul.

~E. M. Forster

I cannot help thinking that there is something to admire in everyone, even if you do not approve of them.

~E. M. Forster

Think before you speak is criticism's motto; speak before you think, creation's.

~E. M. Forster

...the true spirit of gastronomic joylessness. Porridge fills the Englishman up, and prunes clear him out.

~E. M. Forster

One's favorite book is as elusive as one's favorite pudding.

~E. M. Forster

Love is always being given where it is not required.

~E. M. Forster

There is an aristocracy of the sensitive. They represent the true human tradition of permanent victory over cruelty and chaos.

~E. M. Forster

The four characteristics of humanism are curiosity, a free mind, belief in good taste, and belief in the human race.

~E. M. Forster

In the creative state a man is taken out of himself.

~E. M. Forster

Don't believe those lies about intellectual people. They're only written to soothe the majority.

~E. M. Forster

Reverence is fatal to literature.

~E. M. Forster

The people I respect most behave as if they were immortal and as if society was eternal.

~E. M. Forster

Very notable was his distinction between coarseness and vulgarity, coarseness, revealing something; vulgarity, concealing something.

~E. M. Forster

Liking one person is an extra reason for liking another.

~E. M. Forster

The English countryside, its growth and its destruction, is a genuine and tragic theme.

~E. M. Forster

Books have to be read it is the only way of discovering what they contain.

~E. M. Forster

The emotions may be endless. The more we express them, the more we may have to express.

~E. M. Forster

The only books that influence us are those for which we are ready, and which have gone a little farther down our particular path than we have yet got ourselves.

~E. M. Forster

Adventures do occur, but not punctually.

~E. M. Forster

At times our need for a sympathetic gesture is so great that we care not what exactly it signifies or how much we may have to pay for it afterwards.

~E. M. Forster

She loved him absolutely, perhaps for half an hour.

~E. M. Forster

The work of art assumes the existence of the perfect spectator, and is indifferent to the fact that no such person exists.

~E. M. Forster

We are not concerned with the very poor. They are unthinkable, and only to be approached by the statistician or the poet.

~E. M. Forster

I'm a holy man minus the holiness.

~E. M. Forster

For it is a serious thing to have been watched. We all radiate something curiously intimate when we believe ourselves to be alone.

~E. M. Forster

A work of art is never finished. It is merely abandoned.

~E. M. Forster

Expansion, that is the idea the novelist must cling to, not completion, not rounding off, but opening out.

~E. M. Forster

It is easy to sympathize at a distance,' said an old gentleman with a beard. 'I value more the kind word that is spoken close to my ear.

~E. M. Forster

A poem is true if it hangs together. Information points to something else. A poem points to nothing but itself.

~E. M. Forster

To make us feel small in the right way is a function of art; men can only

make us feel small in the wrong way.

~E. M. Forster

When I think of what life is, and how seldom love is answered by love; it is one of the moments for which the world was made.

~E. M. Forster

As her time in Florence drew to a close she was only at ease amongst those to whom she felt indifferent.

~E. M. Forster

The sadness of the incomplete, the sadness that is often Life, but should never be Art.

~E. M. Forster

Our life on earth is, and ought to be, material and carnal. But we have not yet learned to manage our materialism and carnality properly; they are still entangled with the desire for ownership.

~E. M. Forster

I do like Christmas on the whole.... In its clumsy way, it does approach Peace and Goodwill. But it is clumsier every year.

~E. M. Forster

Axiom : Novel must have either one living character or a perfect pattern: fails otherwise.

~E. M. Forster

Words deserted him immediately. He could only speak when he was not asked to.

~E. M. Forster

Beethoven's Fifth Symphony is the most sublime noise that has ever penetrated into the ear of man.

~E. M. Forster

Either life entails courage, or it ceases to be life.

~E. M. Forster

I think you're beautiful, the only beautiful person I've ever seen. I love your voice and everything to do with you, down to your clothes or the room you are sitting in. I adore you.

~E. M. Forster

People have their own deaths as well as their own lives, and even if there is nothing beyond death, we shall differ in our nothingness.

~E. M. Forster

It isn't possible to love and to part.

~E. M. Forster

The historian records, but the novelist creates.

~E. M. Forster

... there are shadows because there are hills.

~E. M. Forster

Neanderthal man listened to stories, if one may judge by the shape of his skull.

~E. M. Forster

Those who prepared for all the emergencies of life beforehand may equip themselves at the expense of joy.

~E. M. Forster

Letters have to pass two tests before they can be classed as good: they must express the personality both of the writer and of the recipient.

~E. M. Forster

Only connect the prose and the passion, and both will be exalted, and human love will be seen at its highest. Live in fragments no longer

~E. M. Forster

No man can be an agnostic who has a sense of humour.

~E. M. Forster

They had nothing in common but the English language.

~E. M. Forster

Excuse my mistakes, realize my limitations. Life is not easy as we know it on the earth.

~E. M. Forster

History develops, art stands still.

~E. M. Forster

When love flies it is remembered not as love but as something else.

~E. M. Forster

Faith, to my mind, is a stiffening process, a sort of mental starch.

~E. M. Forster

But nothing in India is identifiable, the mere asking of a question causes it to disappear or to merge in something else.

~E. M. Forster

Life is easy to chronicle, but bewildering to practice.

~E. M. Forster

It is my fate and perhaps my temperament to sign agreements with fools.

~E. M. Forster

We cast a shadow on something wherever we stand.

~E. M. Forster

So, two cheers for Democracy: one because it admits variety and two because it permits criticism.

~E. M. Forster

Tolerance is a very dull virtue. It is boring. Unlike love, it has always had a bad press. It is negative. It merely means putting up with people, being able to stand things.

~E. M. Forster

There is something majestic in the bad taste of Italy.

~E. M. Forster

Hope, politeness, the blowing of a nose, the squeak of a boot, all produce "boum.

~E. M. Forster

When you come back you will not be you. And I may not be I.

~E. M. Forster

The more highly public life is organized the lower does its morality sink.

~E. M. Forster

Love and understand the Italians, for the people are more marvellous than the land.

~E. M. Forster

Do not be proud of your inconsistency. It is a pity, it is a pity that we should be equipped like this. It is a pity that Man cannot be at the same time impressive and truthful.

~E. M. Forster

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