

Eudora Welty

Quotes

*Writing, Art, Stories, Book, Reading, Character, People, Heart, Voice, Thinking,
Long, Giving, World, Mother, Memories, Fiction, Speak, Children, Running,
Snapshots*

A good snapshot stops a moment from running away.

~Eudora Welty

The excursion is the same when you go looking for your sorrow as when you go looking for your joy.

~Eudora Welty

My continuing passion is to part a curtain, that invisible veil of indifference that falls between us and that blinds us to each other's presence, each other's wonder, each other's human plight.

~Eudora Welty

Southerners love a good tale. They are born reciters, great memory retainers, diary keepers, letter exchangers . . . great talkers.

~Eudora Welty

Insight doesn't happen often on the click of the moment, like a lucky snapshot, but comes in its own time and more slowly and from nowhere but within.

~Eudora Welty

No art ever came out of not risking your neck.

~Eudora Welty

We are the breakers of our own hearts

~Eudora Welty

it doesn't matter if it takes a long time getting there; the point is to have a destination.

~Eudora Welty

The events in our lives happen in a sequence in time, but in their significance to ourselves they find their own order the continuous thread of revelation.

~Eudora Welty

To write honestly and with all our powers is the least we can do, and the most.

~Eudora Welty

People are mostly layers of violence and tenderness wrapped like bulbs, and it is difficult to say what makes them onions or hyacinths.

~Eudora Welty

One place comprehended can make us understand other places better.

~Eudora Welty

A sheltered life can be a daring life as well. For all serious daring starts from within.

~Eudora Welty

All experience is an enrichment rather than an impoverishment.

~Eudora Welty

If you haven't surprised yourself, you haven't written.

~Eudora Welty

I like the feeling of being able to confront an experience and resolve it as art.

~Eudora Welty

Integrity can be neither lost nor concealed nor faked nor quenched nor artificially come by nor outlived, nor, I believe, in the long run, denied.

~Eudora Welty

Indeed, learning to write may be part of learning to read. For all I know, writing comes out of a superior devotion to reading.

~Eudora Welty

Through travel I first became aware of the outside world; it was through travel that I found my own introspective way into becoming a part of it.

~Eudora Welty

A whole tree of lightning stood in the sky. She kept looking out the window, suffused with the warmth from the fire and with the pity and beauty and power of her death. The thunder rolled.

~Eudora Welty

Ah, I'm a woman that's been clear around the world in my rocking chair, and I tell you we all get surprises now and then.

~Eudora Welty

Writing a story or a novel is one way of discovering sequence in experience, of stumbling upon cause and effect in the happenings of a writer's own life.

~Eudora Welty

I had to grow up and learn to listen for the unspoken as well as the spoken-and to know a truth.

~Eudora Welty

No blur of inexactness, no cloud of vagueness, is allowable in good writing; from the first seeing to the last putting down, there must be steady lucidity and uncompromise of purpose.

~Eudora Welty

The first act of insight is throw away the labels.

~Eudora Welty

One place understood helps us understand all places better

~Eudora Welty

It had been startling and disappointing to me to find out that story books had been written by people, that books were not natural wonders, coming of themselves like grass.

~Eudora Welty

There is absolutely everything in great fiction but a clear answer.

~Eudora Welty

Radio, sewing machine, bookends, ironing board and that great big piano lamp - peace, that's what I like. Butterbean vines planted all along the front where the strings are.

~Eudora Welty

She read Dickens in the spirit in which she would have eloped with him.

~Eudora Welty

To imagine yourself inside another person...is what a story writer does in every piece of work; it is his first step, and his last too, I suppose.

~Eudora Welty

The strands are all there; to the memory nothing is ever lost.

~Eudora Welty

Write about what you don't know about what you know.

~Eudora Welty

Time is anonymous; when we give it a face, it's the same face the world over.

~Eudora Welty

Never think you've seen the last of anything.

~Eudora Welty

Relationship is a pervading and changing mystery... brutal or lovely, the mystery waits for people wherever they go, whatever extreme they run to.

~Eudora Welty

Out of love you can speak with straight fury.

~Eudora Welty

Gardening is akin to writing stories. No experience could have taught me more about grief or flowers, about achieving survival by going, your fingers in the ground, the limit of physical exhaustion.

~Eudora Welty

People give pain, are callous and insensitive, empty and cruel...but place heals the hurt, soothes the outrage, fills the terrible vacuum that these human beings make.

~Eudora Welty

Writers and travelers are mesmerized alike by knowing of their destinations.

~Eudora Welty

Learning stamps you with its moments. Childhood's learning is made up of moments. It isn't steady. It's a pulse.

~Eudora Welty

I wanted to read immediately. The only fear was that of books coming to an end.

~Eudora Welty

Long before I wrote stories, I listened for stories. Listening for them is something more acute than listening to them.

~Eudora Welty

Greater than scene is situation. Greater than situation is implication. Greater than all of these is a single, entire human being, who will never be confined in any frame.

~Eudora Welty

Travel itself is part of some longer continuity.

~Eudora Welty

Children, like animals use all their senses to discover the world. Then artists come along and discover it the same way...Or now and then we'll hear from an artist who's never lost it.

~Eudora Welty

The novelist works neither to correct nor to condone, not at all to comfort, but to make what's told alive.

~Eudora Welty

Location pertains to feelings - feelings are bound up in place.

~Eudora Welty

A thing is incredible, if ever, only after it is told -- returned to the world it came out of.

~Eudora Welty

Each story tells me how to write it, but not the one afterwards.

~Eudora Welty

I was always my own teacher.

~Eudora Welty

Beware of a man with manners.

~Eudora Welty

I think that as you learn more about writing you learn to be direct.

~Eudora Welty

The mystery in how little we know of other people is no greater than the mystery of how much, Laurel thought.

~Eudora Welty

Beauty is not a means, not a way of furthering a thing in the world. It is a result; it belongs to ordering, to form, to aftereffect.

~Eudora Welty

The mystery lies in the use of language to express human life.

~Eudora Welty

The very greatest mystery is in unsheathed reality itself.

~Eudora Welty

How can you go out on a limb if you do not know your own tree? No art ever came out of not risking your neck. And risk--experiment--is a considerable part of the joy of doing.

~Eudora Welty

Human life is fiction's only theme.

~Eudora Welty

Each day the storm clouds were opening like great purple flowers and pouring out their dark thunder. Each nightfall, the storm was laid down on their houses like a burden the day had carried.

~Eudora Welty

At the time of writing, I don't write for my friends or myself either; I write for it, for the pleasure of it.

~Eudora Welty

Every story teaches you how to write that story but not the next story.

~Eudora Welty

What we know about writing the novel is the novel.

~Eudora Welty

Fantasy is no good unless the seed it springs from is a truth, a truth about human beings.

~Eudora Welty

Making reality real is art's responsibility.

~Eudora Welty

Once you're into a story everything seems to apply-what you overhear on a city bus is exactly what your character would say on the page you're writing. Wherever you go, you meet part of your story.

~Eudora Welty

Suppose you meet me in the woods.

~Eudora Welty

To open up the new, to look back on the old may bring forth like discoveries in the practice of art.

~Eudora Welty

[William Eggleston] sets forth what makes up our ordinary world. What is there, however strange, can be accepted without question; familiarity will be what overwhelms us.

~Eudora Welty

Every story teaches me how to write it. Unfortunately, it doesn't teach me how to write the next one.

~Eudora Welty

A story is not the same thing when it ends as it was when it began.

~Eudora Welty

Is there any sleeping person you can be entirely sure you have not misjudged?

~Eudora Welty

I'm a great reader that never has time to read.

~Eudora Welty

My mother read secondarily for information; she sank as a hedonist into novels. She read Dickens in the spirit in which she would have eloped with him.

~Eudora Welty

Any room in our house at any time in the day was there to read in or to be read to.

~Eudora Welty

I get a moral satisfaction out of putting things together.

~Eudora Welty

Long before I wrote stories, I listened for stories.

~Eudora Welty

Daydreaming had started me on the way; but story writing once I was truly in its grip, took me and shook me awake.

~Eudora Welty

The first thing we see about a short story is its mystery. And in the best short stories, we return at the last to see mystery again

~Eudora Welty

Plots are ... what the writer sees with.

~Eudora Welty

Reading Chekhov was just like the angels singing to me.

~Eudora Welty

When I read, I hear what's on the page. I don't know whose voice it is, but some voice is reading to me, and when I write my own stories, I hear it, too.

~Eudora Welty

All good writers speak in honest voices and tell the truth.

~Eudora Welty

Look for where the sky is brightest along the horizon. That reflects the nearest river. Strike out for a river and you will find habitation.

~Eudora Welty

Laurel could not see her face but only the back of her neck, the most vulnerable part of anybody, and she thought: Is there any sleeping person you can be entirely sure you have not misjudged?

~Eudora Welty

Passion is our ground, our island - do others exist?

~Eudora Welty

The fictional eye sees in, through, and around what is really there.

~Eudora Welty

Dialogue has to show not only something about the speaker that is its own revelation, but also maybe something about the speaker that he doesn't know but the other character does know.

~Eudora Welty

For the night was not impartial. No, the night loved some more than others, served some more than others.

~Eudora Welty

What I do in the writing of any character is to try to enter into the mind, heart and skin of a human being who is not myself. It is the act of a writer's imagination that I set the most high.

~Eudora Welty

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