

# Hilda Doolittle

## Quotes

*War, Love, Beauty, Art, Life, Men, Knowledge, Heart, Dancing, Cities, Magic,  
Wind, Dream, Death, Flower, Eye, Thinking, Fall, Hate, Light*

In my garden the winds have beaten the ripe lilies; in my garden, the salt has wilted the first flakes of young narcissus.

~Hilda Doolittle

...if you do not even understand what words say, how can you expect to pass judgement on what words conceal?

~Hilda Doolittle

We are voyagers, discoverers of the not-known, the unrecorded; we have no map; possibly we will reach haven, heaven.

~Hilda Doolittle

I will be free, no lover's kiss to bind me to earth, no bliss of love to counteract actual bliss.

~Hilda Doolittle

Dance until the earth dance.

~Hilda Doolittle

She did not look at the daffodils. They didn't mean anything. She looked at the daffodils. She said, 'Thank you for the daffodils.'

~Hilda Doolittle

One flower may slay the winter and meet death.

~Hilda Doolittle

You are wind in a stark tree, you are the stark tree unbent, you are a strung bow, you are an arrow.

~Hilda Doolittle

I could not accept from wisdom what love taught, woman is perfect.

~Hilda Doolittle

Ah love is bitter and sweet, but which is more sweet the bitterness or

the sweetness, none has spoken it.

~Hilda Doolittle

No poetic phantasy but a biological reality, a fact: I am an entity like bird, insect, plant or sea-plant cell; I live; I am alive.

~Hilda Doolittle

Words were her plague and words were her redemption.

~Hilda Doolittle

You will not see that desire begets love, until it all flames into one concise and metallic blaze.

~Hilda Doolittle

O beautiful white land, olives and wild anemone and violet mingled among the shale, and purple wings of little winter-butterflies say, here Psyche, the soul, lies.

~Hilda Doolittle

Until it seems the whole city will be covered with gold pollen shaken from the bell-towers, lilies plundered with the weight of massive bees . .

.

~Hilda Doolittle

I smiled, I waited, I was circumspect; O never, never, never write that I missed life or loving.

~Hilda Doolittle

Pompeii has nothing to teach us, we know crack of volcanic fissure, slow flow of terrible lava, pressure on heart, lungs, the brain about to burst its brittle case (what the skull can endure!)

~Hilda Doolittle

But beauty is set apart, beauty is cast by the sea, a barren rock, beauty

is set about with wrecks of ships.

~Hilda Doolittle

For you are abstract, making no mistake, slurring no word in the rhythm  
you make, the poem, writ in the air.

~Hilda Doolittle

Writing. Love is writing.

~Hilda Doolittle

The elixir of life, the philosopher's stone is yours if you surrender sterile  
logic, trivial reason.

~Hilda Doolittle

No one knows the colour of a flower till it is broken.

~Hilda Doolittle

No one knows, the heart of a child, how it grows until it is too late.

~Hilda Doolittle

The stallion and his mare, unbridled, with arrow-pattern, are worked on.  
the blue cloth before the door of religion and inspiration.

~Hilda Doolittle

When the shingles hissed in the rain incendiary, other values were  
revealed to us

~Hilda Doolittle

I knew the poor, I knew the hideous death they die, when famine lays  
its bleak hand on the door; I knew the rich, sated with merriment, who  
yet are sad.

~Hilda Doolittle

There's a black rose growing in your garden.

~Hilda Doolittle

Luminous, unfeared; high-priestesses, our fervour shall banish all evil.

~Hilda Doolittle

Music sets up ladders, it makes us invisible, it sets us apart, it lets us escape; but from the visible there is no escape.

~Hilda Doolittle

That way of inspiration is always open, and open to everyone; it acts as go-between, interpreter, it explains symbols of the past in to-day's imagery.

~Hilda Doolittle

Dead men would start and move toward me to learn of love.

~Hilda Doolittle

Light threatens, is active, is gone, so it is with a song.

~Hilda Doolittle

The laying of fish on the embers, the taste of the fish, the feel of the texture of bread, the round and the half-loaf, the grain of a petal, the rain-bow and the rain.

~Hilda Doolittle

Escape from the power of the hunting pack, and to know that wisdom is best and beauty sheer holiness.

~Hilda Doolittle

It is no madness to say you will fall, you great cities.

~Hilda Doolittle

War is a fevered god who takes alike maiden and king and clod.

~Hilda Doolittle

I testify to rainbow feathers, to the span of heaven and walls of colour,  
the colonnades of jasper.

~Hilda Doolittle

O happy, happy each man whom predestined fate leads to the holy rite  
of hill and mountain worship.

~Hilda Doolittle

Maid of the luminous grey-eyes, Mistress of honey and marble  
implacable white thighs and Goddess, chaste daughter of Zeus.

~Hilda Doolittle

Sing and your hell is heaven, your heaven less hell.

~Hilda Doolittle

Cheat me not with time, with the dull ache of flesh, for all flesh turns,  
even the loveliest ankle and frail thigh, to bitterest dust.

~Hilda Doolittle

remember the golden apple-trees; O, do not pity them, as you watch  
them drop one by one, for they fall exhausted, numb, blind but in  
certain ecstasy, for theirs is the hunger for Paradise.

~Hilda Doolittle

My eye-balls are glass, my limbs marble, my face fixed in its marble  
mask.

~Hilda Doolittle

Think of the moment you count most foul in your life; conjure it,  
supplicate, pray to it; your face is bleak, you retract, you dare not  
remember it.

~Hilda Doolittle

I spit honey out of my mouth: nothing is second-best after the sweet of

Eros.

~Hilda Doolittle

Passionate grave thought, belief enhanced, ritual returned and magic.

~Hilda Doolittle

For this beauty, beauty without strength, chokes out life.

~Hilda Doolittle

Every concrete object has abstract value, is timeless in the dream parallel.

~Hilda Doolittle

I fear no man, no woman; flower does not fear bird, insect nor adder.

~Hilda Doolittle

The heart the heart the heart how it thrives on hate.

~Hilda Doolittle

The things I have are nameless, old and true; they may not be named; few may live and know.

~Hilda Doolittle

War wreaked on you his hideous ravishment; We, we alone, Nereids inviolate, Remain to weep, with the sea-birds to chant: Corinth is lost, Corinth is desolate.

~Hilda Doolittle

Take what the old-church found in Mithra's tomb, candle and script and bell, take what the new-church spat upon and broke and shattered.

~Hilda Doolittle

Fall the deep curtains, delicate the weave, fair the thread.

~Hilda Doolittle

Love has no charm when Love is swept to earth: you'd make a lop-winged god, frozen and contrite, of god up-darting, winged for passionate flight.

~Hilda Doolittle

(Those women whom the distaff no longer claims nor spun cloth) driven made, mad, mad by Bacchus.

~Hilda Doolittle

There must be real gods see, the painted gods how fair!

~Hilda Doolittle

Lovers may come and go, there was the memory of blood, the low call.

~Hilda Doolittle

Love, why have you sought the horde of spearsmen, why the tent Achilles pitched beside the river-ford?

~Hilda Doolittle

Who dreams of a son, save one, childless, having no bright face to flatter its own, who dreams of a son?

~Hilda Doolittle

Could beauty be beaten out, O youth the cities have sent to strike at each other's strength, it is you who have kept her alight.

~Hilda Doolittle

I had drawn away into the salt, myself, a shell emptied of life.

~Hilda Doolittle

Thoth, Hermes, the stylus, the palette, the pen, the quill endure, though our books are a floor of smouldering ash under our feet.

~Hilda Doolittle

The race may or may not be to the swift, but tell me, is it likely that the fight will be entrusted to the dead?

~Hilda Doolittle

A slight wind shakes the seed-pods my thoughts are spent as the black seeds.

~Hilda Doolittle

Lift up our eyes to you? no, God, we stare and stare, upon a nearer thing that greets us here, Death, violent and near.

~Hilda Doolittle

We are these people, wistful, ironical, wilful, who have no part in new-world reconstruction, in the confederacy of labour.

~Hilda Doolittle

O do not weep, she says, for ages past I was and I endure

~Hilda Doolittle

Not God with wine, nor death, nor hate for a cry, but God with a song

~Hilda Doolittle

Long hours trail in their purple and long years are lost in just this moment while our souls are near, our mouths separate.

~Hilda Doolittle

The quivering of Psyche's butterflies.

~Hilda Doolittle

No man will be present in those mysteries, yet all men will kneel, no man will be potent, important, yet all men will feel what it is to be a woman.

~Hilda Doolittle

Ardent yet chill and formal, how I ache to tempt a chisel as a sculptor.

~Hilda Doolittle

Love that I bear within my breast how is my armour melted how my heart

~Hilda Doolittle

The Greeks have snatched up their spears. They have pointed the helms of their ships Toward the bulwarks of Troy.

~Hilda Doolittle

I myself have seen the floating ships And nothing will ever be the same  
The shouts, The harrowing voices within the house. I stand apart with  
an army: My mind is graven with ships.

~Hilda Doolittle

Alas, day, you brought light, You trailed splendour You showed us god:  
I salute you, most precious one, But I go to a new place, Another life.

~Hilda Doolittle

Let Love step down, open the clasped hands, forfeit the thorny crown,  
retrieve the garment that was whole, body and spirit one, spirit and  
soul.

~Hilda Doolittle

The Christos-image is most difficult to disentangle from its art-craft  
junk-shop paint-and-plaster medieval jumble of pain-worship and  
death-symbol.

~Hilda Doolittle

O ruthless, perilous, imperious hate, you can not thwart the promptings  
of my soul.

~Hilda Doolittle

When you would think, "what was the use of it," you'll remember something you can't grasp and you'll wonder what it was.

~Hilda Doolittle

The whole white world is ours.

~Hilda Doolittle

We don't have to know, only to be: let go the jumble of worn words, reason and vanity.

~Hilda Doolittle

Why wait for Death to mow? why wait for Death to sow us in the ground?

~Hilda Doolittle

Love is a garment riven in the light that rises from Parnassus, showing the night is over.

~Hilda Doolittle

There is no man can take, there is no pool can slake, ultimately I am alone; ultimately I am done.

~Hilda Doolittle

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