

# Ivy Compton-Burnett Quotes

*People, Writing, Real, Thinking, Children, Mind, Family, Youth, Book, Plot, Doe,  
Parent, Giving, Use, Would Be, Self, Way, Grateful, Kind, Wells*

A leopard does not change his spots, or change his feeling that spots are rather a credit.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

Anyone who picks up a Compton-Burnett finds it very hard not to put it down.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

There are different kinds of wrong. The people sinned against are not always the best.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

My youth is escaping without giving me anything it owes me.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

We can build upon foundations anywhere if they are well and firmly laid.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

As regards plot I find real life no help at all. Real life seems to have no plots. And as I think a plot desirable and almost necessary, I have this extra grudge against life.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

Real life seems to have no plots.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

I never know why self-sacrifice is noble. Why is it better to sacrifice oneself than someone else?

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

Many people misjudge the permanent effect of sorrow, and their capacity to live in the past.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

I wonder the human race has been so fond of migrations, when the young take so hardly to traveling.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

Appearances are not held to be a clue to the truth,' said his cousin. 'But we seem to have no other.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

A plot is like the bones of a person, not interesting like expression, or signs of experience, but the support of the whole.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

Pushing forty? She's hanging on for dear life.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

A person who can really be called an unselfish person, has no place in life.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

At a certain point my novels set. They set just as hard as that jam jar. And then I know they are finished.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

There is danger in courage. Cowardice is a power for good. We hardly know what it prevents.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

The most original novelist now writing in English.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

There is more difference within the sexes than between them.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

People who have power respond simply. They have no minds but their

own.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

When I die, people will say it is the best thing for me. It is because they know it is the worst. They want to avoid the feeling of pity. As though they were the people most concerned!

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

I am ill at ease with people whose lives are an open book.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

Dear, dear, the miniature world of the family! All the emotions of mankind seem to find a place in it.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

There is probably nothing like living together for blinding people to each other.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

There isn't much to say. I haven't been at all deedy.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

People's weaker side is not necessarily their truer self.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

We do not discuss the members of our family to their faces.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

Never is a long word.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

Real charity and real ability never to condemn-the one real virtue-is so often the result of a waking experience that gives a glimpse of what lies beneath things.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

We are always children to our mothers.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

The plot is not very important to me, though a novel must have one, of course. It's just a line to hang the washing on.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

You should not want to know the things in people's minds. If you were meant to hear them, they would be said.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

I think I feel on the whole that something's there trying to get out ... It's sort of trying to get out and wants help.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

People have never lost what they think they have.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

Well, of course, people are only human... But it really does not seem much for them to be.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

Civilized life exacts its toll.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

To young people the future is still long.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

It is no good to think that other people are out to serve our interests.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

Our desires have a way of getting bigger with our incomes.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

It is better to be drunk with loss and to beat the ground, than to let the deeper things gradually escape.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

Ah, we have to be generous to be grateful ... One has oneself to be a giver.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

Truth is so impossible. Something has to be done for it.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

It is not for us to hold ourselves above the position of grateful people. We have to be able to accept. Anything else shows an unwillingness to grant someone else the superior place.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

If I were not a child with my parents, they would be more unloving toward me.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

What concerns anyone so much as the time he has to live?

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

charm should be on the surface. It has no hidden use.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

Duty is seldom liked either by the doer or the object ... And why should it be? It is not often of advantage to either.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

Parents have too little respect for their children, just as the children have too much for the parents.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

Magnifying a matter is not the way to mend it.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

it is in our minds that we live much of our life.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

some people always have a touch of youth about them.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

We none of us talk to people as we do behind their backs.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

As regards plots I find real life no help at all. Real life seems to have no plots.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

We must use words as they are used, or stand aside from life.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

[On writing:] What a difficult kind of work to choose! But of course one did not choose it. There was no choice.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

It will be a beautiful family talk, mean and worried and full of sorrow and spite and excitement.

~Ivy Compton-Burnett

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