

Jamaica Kincaid

Quotes

*Writing, People, Thinking, Black, Book, Race, Mother, Way, Want, Ideas, World,
Past, Children, Garden, Reading, Reality, Used, Lines, Men, Feels*

There's something to be said about a slightly plump personâ€”you have just enough of too much.

~Jamaica Kincaid

The inevitable is no less a shock just because it is inevitable.

~Jamaica Kincaid

Express everything you like. No word can hurt you. None. No idea can hurt you. Not being able to express an idea or word will hurt you more. Like a bullet.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I was given a dictionary when I was seven, and I read it because I had nothing else to read. I read it the way you read a book.

~Jamaica Kincaid

People don't make changes because things are wonderful.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I would be lost without the feeling of antagonism that people have towards me. I write out of defiance.

~Jamaica Kincaid

People only say I'm angry because I'm black and I'm a woman.

~Jamaica Kincaid

A great piece of literature encompasses all that is and all that will be.

~Jamaica Kincaid

...yet a memory cannot be trusted, for so much of the experience of the past is determined by the experience of the present.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I'm so used to being misunderstood.

~Jamaica Kincaid

When I'm writing, I think about the garden, and when I'm in the garden I think about writing. I do a lot of writing by putting something in the ground.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I write a lot in my head. The revision goes on internally. It's not spontaneous and it doesn't have a schedule.

~Jamaica Kincaid

A professional writer is a joke. You write because you can't do anything else, and then you have another job.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I like melancholy. I like to pretend that I'm alone in the world and I'm just sort of abandoned.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I'm always surprised to hear or read my work described, "In angry tones, she says." No! In truthful tones! Does truth have a tone? I don't know.

~Jamaica Kincaid

At the time I was taught to read, it was an Eden-like time of my life. My mother adored me. Everyone adored me. So I associate reading with enormous pleasure.

~Jamaica Kincaid

Habit gives endurance, and fatigue is the best night cap.

~Jamaica Kincaid

People think if you describe someone with glistening brown skin you're writing about race, as if the whole of the African diaspora is in

someone's brown skin.

~Jamaica Kincaid

The slave trade was globalism. Why people insist that globalism, after its hideous history, is a good thing, I do not know.

~Jamaica Kincaid

If I actually ran the world, I'd do it from the kitchen. It's not anything deliberate or a statement or anything, that's just how I understand things. It's arranged along informal lines.

~Jamaica Kincaid

The families of rabbits or woodchucks will eat the salad greens just before they are ready to be picked; I plot ways to kill these animals but can never bring myself to do it.

~Jamaica Kincaid

What I really want to write about is injustice and justice, and the different ways human beings organize the two.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I think a woman is powerless if she cannot freely claim the right to her reproductive capacity. Society can talk about anything it likes, except a woman's reproductive existence.

~Jamaica Kincaid

Here I am, a product of something really vicious, product of the Atlantic slave trade. And yet, I give nary a thought to some of the awful things happening right now in the world.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I used to want to be a backup singer. Not a lead singer, because I really can't sing.

~Jamaica Kincaid

What I don't write is as important as what I write.

~Jamaica Kincaid

Time is the element that controls the consciousness, the very being of the people.

~Jamaica Kincaid

the first step in claiming yourself is anger. You get mad. And you can't do anything before you get angry. And I recommend getting very angry to everyone, anyone.

~Jamaica Kincaid

Love and hatred don't take turns; they exist side by side at the same time. And one's duty, one's obligation every day, is to choose to follow the nobler one.

~Jamaica Kincaid

Writing is not a profession. It's a calling. It's almost holy.

~Jamaica Kincaid

when people say you're charming you are in deep trouble.

~Jamaica Kincaid

The garden has taught me to live, to appreciate the times when things are fallow and when they're not.

~Jamaica Kincaid

Friendship is a simple thing, and yet complicated; friendship is on the surface, something natural, something taken for granted, and yet underneath one could find worlds.

~Jamaica Kincaid

The past is a room full of baggage and rubbish and sometimes things that are of use, but if they are of real use, I have kept them.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I can't get upset about 'offensive to women' or 'offensive to blacks' or 'offensive to Native Americans' or 'offensive to Jews' ... Offend! I can't get worked up about it. Offend!

~Jamaica Kincaid

Every time I end a book, I look down at myself.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I'm sometimes afraid I'll cross a line and it'll be difficult to come back, say, to dinner.

~Jamaica Kincaid

if I'd thought that nobody would like it as I was writing it, I would have written it even more. But I never think of the audience. I never think of people reading. I never think of people, period.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I didn't really understand racism because I grew up in an all-black society, so I didn't see how it was possible not to like me!

~Jamaica Kincaid

It's too easy to say this or that is "race," and that has been a vehicle for an incredible amount of wrong in the world.

~Jamaica Kincaid

Sometimes when someone says something stupid, my friends and I just read the reviews out loud and collapse with laughter at the stupidity of it all.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I would never never read a work of fiction and want to know about the person's life.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I was then at the height of my two-facedness: that is, outside I seemed one way, inside I was another; outside false, inside true.

~Jamaica Kincaid

When once I got to America I fell in love with hippie culture, and I've always wanted to live in the country and grow organic vegetables.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I come from the small island of Antigua and I always wanted to write; I just didn't know that it was possible.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I swim in a shaft of light, upside down, and I can see myself clearly, through and through, from every angle. Perhaps I stand on the brink of a great discovery.

~Jamaica Kincaid

Of course, every time I end a book, I look down at myself and I'm just the same. I'm always disappointed that I'm just the same, but not enough to never do it again!

~Jamaica Kincaid

He must have smiled at me, though I don't really know, but I don't like to think that I would love someone who hadn't first smiled at me.

~Jamaica Kincaid

Why is a picture of something real eventually more exciting than the thing itself?

~Jamaica Kincaid

I didn't know it was possible to be successful as a writer, so I wasn't afraid to fail.

~Jamaica Kincaid

There's a difference between bravery and rash stupidity.

~Jamaica Kincaid

A tourist is an ugly human being.

~Jamaica Kincaid

That was the moment he got the idea he possessed me in a certain way, and that was the moment I grew tired of him.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I read about writers who have routines. They write at certain times of the day. I can't do that. I am always writing-but in my head.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I was a new person then, I knew things I had not known before, I knew things that you can know only if you have been through what I had just been through.

~Jamaica Kincaid

It is sad that unless you are born a god, your life, from its very beginning, is a mystery to you.

~Jamaica Kincaid

The sound of words in a novel is a pretty amazing thing, and I am concerned with the sound of every word I write.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I don't really do anything that isn't about writing, and I don't really know who I am if I'm not thinking about writing.

~Jamaica Kincaid

It is true that our skin is sort of more or less the same shade. But is it

true that our skin color makes us a distinctive race? No.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I loved Charlotte Bronte when I was little, and I wanted to be Charlotte Bronte the way people want to be a princess.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I'll read anything. In fact, I'll read while I'm doing other things, which is not a good idea.

~Jamaica Kincaid

It was hollow, my triumph, I could feel that, but I held on to it just the same.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I think in many ways the problem that my writing would have with an American reviewer is that Americans find difficulty very hard to take. They are inevitably looking for a happy ending.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I write out of defiance.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I like cooking, but I think someone else ought to do the dishes.

~Jamaica Kincaid

What distinguished my life from my brother's is that my mother didn't like me. When I became a woman, I seemed to repel her.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I've never gotten used to winter and never will.

~Jamaica Kincaid

When I write a book, I hope to be beyond mortal by the time I'm

finished.

~Jamaica Kincaid

When I start to write something, I suppose I want it to change me, to make me into something not myself.

~Jamaica Kincaid

My disappointments stand up and grow ever taller. They will not be lost to me.

~Jamaica Kincaid

It's very funny, American society: White culture can do all sorts of things and get away with it, but the minute a black person does it, it's interpreted in some way.

~Jamaica Kincaid

Someone who knew me well once accused me of being unromantic. And that's probably true: I don't trust romance.

~Jamaica Kincaid

A piece of cloth that is called "linen" has more validity than calling you and me "black" or "negro." "Cotton" has more validity as cotton than yours and my being "black."

~Jamaica Kincaid

I know that the fantastic amount of profit that people want to make on anything is damaging. And that none of us seem able to resist it.

~Jamaica Kincaid

If you just sit there, and you're a writer, you're bound to write crap. A lot of American writing is crap. And a lot of American writers are professionals.

~Jamaica Kincaid

The thing we call romance is a diversion from something truer, which is life.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I've come to see that I'm saying something that people generally do not want to hear.

~Jamaica Kincaid

The history of race relations in America is very different than something like the Holocaust.

~Jamaica Kincaid

None of us seem to think that we should draw a line under what would be a satisfactory amount of wealth.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I wouldn't mind being labeled as "angry," if it wasn't used once again to denigrate and belittle.

~Jamaica Kincaid

My writing has always been met with derision or dismissal.

~Jamaica Kincaid

The thing about writing in America is that writers in America have an arc. You enter writing as a career, you expect to be successful, and really it's the wrong thing. It's not a profession.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I suppose you could say I love outlaw American culture.

~Jamaica Kincaid

On their way to freedom, some people find riches, some people find death.

~Jamaica Kincaid

In isolation I ruthlessly plow the deep silences, seeking my opportunities like a miner seeking veins of treasures. In what shallow glimmering space shall I find what glimmering glory?

~Jamaica Kincaid

Life has a truth to it, and it's complicated - it's love and it's hatred.

~Jamaica Kincaid

No matter how happy I had been in the past I do not long for it. The present is always the moment for which I love.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I've never let the criticism deter me.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I'm very aware that we make these decisions toward love or hate every day. I certainly don't have the stamina to live through each day making only the noblest decisions.

~Jamaica Kincaid

Who you are is a mystery no one can answer, not even you.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I wish that I could love someone so much that I would die from it.

~Jamaica Kincaid

Like father like son, like mother like daughter!

~Jamaica Kincaid

I'm trying to earn a living in the way that is most enjoyable to me. I love the world of literature, and I hope to support myself in it.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I am not aware of anything below my neck. I live completely in my

head.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I can write anywhere. I actually wrote more than I ever did when I had small children. My children were never a hindrance.

~Jamaica Kincaid

In my writing I'm trying to explore the violations people commit upon each other.

~Jamaica Kincaid

One of the things reading does, it makes your loneliness manageable if you are an essentially lonely person.

~Jamaica Kincaid

I had come to feel that my mother's love for me was designed solely to make me into an echo of her; and I didn't know why, but I felt that I would rather be dead than become just an echo of someone.

~Jamaica Kincaid

Tomorrow exists even though I may not exist in it.

~Jamaica Kincaid

The people who invented race, who grouped us together as "black," were inventing and categorizing their ability to do something vicious and wrong.

~Jamaica Kincaid

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