

John Cheever Quotes

*Writing, Men, Dream, Children, People, Rain, Light, Love, Country, World, Art,
Lying, Night, Mean, Fall, Evil, Heart, Hands, Stories, Baseball*

A lonely man is a lonesome thing, a stone, a bone, a stick, a receptacle for Gilbey's gin, a stooped figure sitting at the edge of a hotel bed, heaving copious sighs like the autumn wind.

~John Cheever

It was a splendid summer morning and it seemed as if nothing could go wrong.

~John Cheever

All literary men are Red Sox fans - to be a Yankee fan in a literate society is to endanger your life.

~John Cheever

That's the way I remember them, heading for an exit.

~John Cheever

Fear tastes like a rusty knife and do not let her into your house.

~John Cheever

Homesickness is nothing. Fifty percent of the people in the world are homesick all the time.

~John Cheever

Fiction is art and art is the triumph over chaosâ€¦ to celebrate a world that lies spread out around us like a bewildering and stupendous dream.

~John Cheever

Art is the triumph over chaos.

~John Cheever

I've been homesick for countries I've never been, and longed to be where I couldn't be.

~John Cheever

Then it is dark; it is a night where kings in golden suits ride elephants over the mountains.

~John Cheever

The short story is the literature of the nomad.

~John Cheever

My veins are filled, once a week with a Neapolitan carpet cleaner distilled from the Adriatic and I am as bald as an egg. However I still get around and am mean to cats.

~John Cheever

There is a terrible sameness to the euphoria of alcohol and the euphoria of metaphor.

~John Cheever

Literature has been the salvation of the damned, literature has inspired and guided lovers, routed despair and can perhaps in this case save the world.

~John Cheever

I do not understand the capricious lewdness of the sleeping mind.

~John Cheever

A collection of short stories is generally thought to be a horrendous clinker; an enforced courtesy for the elderly writer who wants to display the trophies of his youth, along with his trout flies.

~John Cheever

When I remember my family, I always remember their backs. They were always indignantly leaving places.

~John Cheever

I can't write without a reader. It's precisely like a kiss - you can't do it

alone.

~John Cheever

For me, a page of good prose is where one hears the rain and the noise of battle. It has the power to give grief or universality that lends it a youthful beauty.

~John Cheever

I dream that my face appears on a postage stamp.

~John Cheever

I believe that writing is an account of the powers of extrication.

~John Cheever

Good writers are often excellent at a hundred other things, but writing promises a greater latitude for the ego.

~John Cheever

People look for morals in fiction because there has always been a confusion between fiction and philosophy.

~John Cheever

The deep joy we take in the company of people with whom we have just recently fallen in love is undisguisable.

~John Cheever

Wisdom we know is the knowledge of good and evil - not the strength to choose between the two.

~John Cheever

Only the opium eater truly understands the pain of death.

~John Cheever

Fiction must compete with first-rate reporting. If you cannot write a story

that is equal to a factual account of battle in the streets or demonstrations, then you can't write a story.

~John Cheever

Fiction is experimentation; when it ceases to be that, it ceases to be fiction.

~John Cheever

I love you not for the person you are, but for your possibilities.

~John Cheever

You can't expect to communicate with anyone if you're a bore.

~John Cheever

The organizations of men, like men themselves, seem subject to deafness, near-sightedness, lameness, and involuntary cruelty. We seem tragically unable to help one another, to understand one another.

~John Cheever

The irony of Christmas is always upon the poor in heart; the mystery of the solstice is always upon the rest of us.

~John Cheever

I sometimes go back to walk through the ghostly remains of Sutton Place where the rude, new buildings stand squarely in one another's river views.

~John Cheever

Love with its paraphernalia of sexuality, jealousy, nostalgia and exaltation was easier to recognize than friendship, which seemed to have (excepting athletic equipment) no paraphernalia at all.

~John Cheever

The main emotion of the adult American who has had all the

advantages of wealth, education, and culture is disappointment.

~John Cheever

Never eat a heavily sugared doughnut before you go on TV.

~John Cheever

The novel remains for me one of the few forms where we can record man's complexity and the strength and decency of his longings.

~John Cheever

For lovers, touch is metamorphosis. All the parts of their bodies seem to change, and they seem to become something different and better.

~John Cheever

I have always been the lover - never the beloved - and I have spent much of my life waiting for trains, planes, boats, footsteps, doorbells, letters, telephones, snow, rain, thunder.

~John Cheever

The need to write comes from the need to make sense of one's life and discover one's usefulness.

~John Cheever

To be an American and unable to play baseball is comparable to being a Polynesian and unable to swim.

~John Cheever

Everything outside was elegant and savage and fleshy. Everything inside was slow and cool and vacant. It seemed a shame to stay inside.

~John Cheever

When the beginnings of self destruction enter the heart, it seems no bigger than a grain of sand.

~John Cheever

It is not, as somebody once wrote, the smell of corn bread that calls us back from death; it is the lights and signs of love and friendship.

~John Cheever

Fear tastes like a rusty knife and do not let her into your house. Courage tastes of blood. Stand up straight. Admire the world. Relish the love of a gentle woman.

~John Cheever

Children drown, beautiful women are mangled in automobile accidents, cruise ships founder, and men die lingering deaths in mines and submarines, but you will find none of this in my accounts.

~John Cheever

How can we describe the most exalted experience of our physical lives [sex], as if-jack, wrench, hubcap, and nuts-we were describing the changing of a flat tire?

~John Cheever

Sometimes the easiest-seeming stories to a reader are the hardest kind to write.

~John Cheever

Avoid kneeling in unheated stone churches. Ecclesiastical dampness causes prematurely grey hair.

~John Cheever

Novels are about men and women and children and dogs, not politics.

~John Cheever

A page of good prose remains invincible.

~John Cheever

I look up the telephone number of Alcoholics Anonymous. Then, my hands shaking, I open the bar and drink the leftover whiskey, gin and vermouth-whatever I can lay my shaking hands on.

~John Cheever

The fear of death is for all of us everywhere, but for the great intelligence of the opium eater it is beautifully narrowed into the crux of drugs.

~John Cheever

How can a people who do not mean to understand death hope to understand love, and who will sound the alarm?

~John Cheever

I was here on earth because I chose to be.

~John Cheever

The constants that I look for are a love of light and a determination to trace some moral chain of being.

~John Cheever

I write to make sense of my life." -John Cheever, quoted in *_Cheever - A Life_* (2009) by Blake Bailey

~John Cheever

I don't like to see all my energies, all of my youth, wasted in fur coats and radios and slipcovers.

~John Cheever

For these are not as they might seem to be, the ruins of our civilization, but are temporary encampment and outposts of the civilization that we - you and I - shall build.

~John Cheever

Now working is terribly painful and I'm still having a fight with the booze. I've enlisted the help of a doctor but it's touch and go. A day for me; a day for the hootch.

~John Cheever

Without a reader, I cannot write. It's like a kiss: they cannot be done alone.

~John Cheever

Admire the world. Relish the love of a gentle woman. Trust in the lord.

~John Cheever

Related Links:

- Writing Quotes
- Men Quotes
- Dream Quotes
- Children Quotes
- People Quotes
- Rain Quotes
- Light Quotes
- Love Quotes
- Country Quotes
- World Quotes
- Art Quotes
- Lying Quotes
- Night Quotes
- Mean Quotes
- Fall Quotes
- Evil Quotes
- Heart Quotes
- Hands Quotes
- Stories Quotes
- Baseball Quotes