

John Gardner Quotes

*Writing, Art, Dream, People, Home, Sea, Moving, Wall, Order, Reality, World,
Inspiration, Fashion, Might, Teeth, Grief, Feel Good, Thumbs, Memories,
Believe*

Self pity is easily the most destructive of the non-pharmaceutical narcotics; it is addictive, gives momentary pleasure and separates the victim from reality.

~John Gardner

Talking, talking. Spinning a web of words, pale walls of dreams, between myself and all I see.

~John Gardner

We read five words on the first page of a really good novel and we begin to forget that we are reading printed words on a page; we begin to see images.

~John Gardner

What art ought to do is tell stories which are moment-by-moment wonderful, which are true to human experience, and which in no way explain human experience.

~John Gardner

The citizen can bring our political and governmental institutions back to life, make them responsive and accountable, and keep them honest. No one else can.

~John Gardner

Fiction does not spring into the world fully grown, like Athena. It is the process of writing and rewriting that makes a fiction original, if not profound.

~John Gardner

Art, of course, is a way of thinking, a way of mining reality.

~John Gardner

As a rule of thumb I say, if Socrates, Jesus and Tolstoy wouldn't do it, don't.

~John Gardner

When people are serving, life is no longer meaningful.

~John Gardner

One of the many interesting challenges nature presents us is its apparent disinterest in maintaining the order humans crave.

~John Gardner

One must be just a little crazy to write a great novel. One must be capable of allowing the darkest, most ancient and shrewd parts of one's being to take over the work from time to time.

~John Gardner

The primary subject of fiction is and has always been human emotion, values, and beliefs.

~John Gardner

Writing a novel is like heading out over the open sea in a small boat. It helps, if you have a plan and a course laid out.

~John Gardner

The image-managers encourage the individual to fashion himself into a smooth coin, negotiable in any market.

~John Gardner

When I was a child I truly loved: Unthinking love as calm and deep As the North Sea. But I have lived, And now I do not sleep.

~John Gardner

Art Gropes. It stalks like a hunter lost in the woods, listening to itself and to everything around it, unsure of itself, waiting to pounce.

~John Gardner

Poor Grendel's had an accident. So may you all.

~John Gardner

Great things happen nationally when topmost leadership is goaded and supported from below.

~John Gardner

There is no limit to desire but desire's needs.

~John Gardner

I cannot believe such monstrous energy of grief can lead to nothing!

~John Gardner

Find a pile of gold and sit on it.

~John Gardner

It would be, for me, mere pointless pleasure, an illusion of order for this one frail, foolish, flicker-flash in the long dull fall of eternity.

~John Gardner

They watch on, evil, incredibly stupid, enjoying my destruction. 'Poor Grendel's had an accident,' I whisper. 'So may you all.'

~John Gardner

I couldn't go on, too conscious all at once of my whispering, my eternal posturing, always transforming the world with words--changing nothing.

~John Gardner

So childhood too feels good at first, before one happens to notice the terrible sameness, age after age.

~John Gardner

Our noblest hopes grow teeth and pursue us like tigers.

~John Gardner

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