

Marianne Moore

Quotes

*Writing, Men, Thinking, People, Hands, Art, Animal, Self, Stars, Mind, Sea, War,
Heart, Reading, Poetry, Life, Imagination, Looks, Peace, Water*

As for butterflies, I can hardly conceive of one's attending upon you; but to question the congruence of the complement is vain, if it exists.

~Marianne Moore

Poetry is the art of creating imaginary gardens with real toads.

~Marianne Moore

Your thorns are the best part of you.

~Marianne Moore

Any writer overwhelmingly honest about pleasing himself is almost sure to please others.

~Marianne Moore

Originality is... a by-product of sincerity.

~Marianne Moore

Camels are snobbish and sheep, unintelligent; water buffaloes, neurasthenic-- even murderous. Reindeer seem over-serious.

~Marianne Moore

Omissions are not accidents.

~Marianne Moore

The hands are the heart's messengers.

~Marianne Moore

The passion for setting people right is in itself an afflictive disease.

~Marianne Moore

When one cannot appraise out of one's own experience, the temptation to blunder is minimized, but even when one can, appraisal seems chiefly useful as appraisal of the appraiser.

~Marianne Moore

The heart that gives, gathers.

~Marianne Moore

Superior people never make long visits.

~Marianne Moore

Conscious writing can be the death of poetry.

~Marianne Moore

A writer is unfair to himself when he is unable to be hard on himself.

~Marianne Moore

Beauty is everlasting And dust is for a time.

~Marianne Moore

War is pillage versus resistance and if illusions of magnitude could be transmuted into ideals of magnanimity, peace might be realized.

~Marianne Moore

One writes because one has a burning desire to objectify what it is indispensable to one's happiness to express.

~Marianne Moore

The mind is an enchanting thing.

~Marianne Moore

Impatience is the mark of independence, not of bondage.

~Marianne Moore

The power of the visible is the invisible.

~Marianne Moore

The deepest feeling always shows itself in silence.

~Marianne Moore

There never was a war that was not inward; I must fight till I have conquered in myself what causes war.

~Marianne Moore

You're not free until you've been made captive by supreme belief.

~Marianne Moore

Wolf's wool is the best of wool, / but it cannot be sheared because / the wolf will not comply.

~Marianne Moore

Egotism is usually subversive of sagacity.

~Marianne Moore

Excess is the common substitute for energy.

~Marianne Moore

If we can't be cordial to these creatures' fleece, I think that we deserve to freeze.

~Marianne Moore

The Irish say your trouble is their trouble and your joy their joy? I wish I could believe it; I am troubled, I'm dissatisfied, I'm Irish.

~Marianne Moore

I'm troubled. I'm dissatisfied. I'm Irish.

~Marianne Moore

We Call Them the Brave who likely were reluctant to be brave.

~Marianne Moore

When we think we don't like art it is because it is artificial art.

~Marianne Moore

I see no reason for calling my work poetry except that there is no other category in which to put it.

~Marianne Moore

the sea is a collector, quick to return a rapacious look.

~Marianne Moore

The mind is an enchanting thing is an enchanted thing, like the glaze on a katydid-wing subdivided by sun till the nettings are legion.

~Marianne Moore

The cynics in life are the people who are always trying to do things for people who don't want things done for them.

~Marianne Moore

It is human nature to stand in the middle of a thing.

~Marianne Moore

Unconfusion submits its confusion to proof; it's not a Herod's oath that cannot change.

~Marianne Moore

When you take my time, you take something I had meant to use.

~Marianne Moore

In a poem the excitement has to maintain itself. I am governed by the pull of the sentence as the pull of a fabric is governed by gravity.

~Marianne Moore

I believe verbal felicity is the fruit of ardor, of diligence, and of refusing to be false.

~Marianne Moore

I never 'plan' a stanza. Words cluster like chromosomes, determining

the procedure.

~Marianne Moore

One must be as clear as one's natural reticence allows one to be.

~Marianne Moore

If you will tell me why the fen appears impassable, I then will tell you why I think that I can cross it if I try.

~Marianne Moore

O to be a dragon, a symbol of the power of Heaven-of silk-worm size or immense; at times invisible. Felicitous phenomenon!

~Marianne Moore

[The] whirlwind fife-and-drum of the storm bends the salt marsh grass, disturbs stars in the sky and the star on the steeple; it is a privilege to see so much confusion.

~Marianne Moore

At all events there is in Brooklyn something that makes me feel at home.

~Marianne Moore

The weak overcomes its/ menace, the strong over-/comes itself.

~Marianne Moore

There never was a war that was not inward.

~Marianne Moore

Does it follow that because there are poisonous toadstools which resemble mushrooms, both are dangerous?

~Marianne Moore

There is a great amount of poetry in unconscious fastidiousness.

~Marianne Moore

Psychology, which explains everything, Explains nothing, And we are still in doubt.

~Marianne Moore

My father used to say, "Superior people never make long visits, have to be shown Longfellows grave, or the glass flowers at Harvard."

~Marianne Moore

The sweet air coming into your house on a fine day, from water etched with waves as formal as the scales on a fish.

~Marianne Moore

Which of us has not been stunned by the beauty of an animal's skin or its flexibility in motion?

~Marianne Moore

Poetry is all nouns and verbs.

~Marianne Moore

I, too, dislike it. Reading it, however, with a perfect contempt for it, one discovers in it, after all, a place for the genuine.

~Marianne Moore

Not till the poets among us can be "literalists of the imagination"-above insolence and triviality and can present for inspection, "imaginary gardens with real toads in them." shall we have it.

~Marianne Moore

As contagion of sickness makes sickness, contagion of trust can make trust.

~Marianne Moore

Only imagination that towers can reproduce evanescence and render rigidity flexible.

~Marianne Moore

All are / naked, none is safe.

~Marianne Moore

Yuleâ€™Yul log for the Christmas-fire tale-spinnerâ€™of fairy tales that can come true: Yul Brynner.

~Marianne Moore

Poetry a place for the genuine, Hands that can grasp, eyes that can dilate, hair that can rise

~Marianne Moore

What is our innocence, What is our guilt? All are naked, none is safe.

~Marianne Moore

Among animals, one has a sense of humor. Humor saves a few steps, it saves years.

~Marianne Moore

When one is frank, one's very presence is a compliment.

~Marianne Moore

To wear the arctic fox you have to kill it.

~Marianne Moore

Everything I have written is the result of reading or of interest in people.

~Marianne Moore

We are suffering from too much sarcasm.

~Marianne Moore

Victory won't come to me unless I go to it; a grape tendril ties a knot in knots till knotted thirty times

~Marianne Moore

One detects creative power by its capacity to conquer one's detachment.

~Marianne Moore

Poetry, that is to say the poetic, is a primal necessity.

~Marianne Moore

So wary as to disappear for centuries and reappear but never caught, the unicorn has been preserved by an unmatched device wrought like the work of expert blacksmiths.

~Marianne Moore

In a poem the words should be as pleasing to the ear as the meaning is to the mind.

~Marianne Moore

If technique is of no interest to a writer, I doubt that the writer is an artist.

~Marianne Moore

The enslaver is enslaved, the hater, harmed.

~Marianne Moore

Assign Yogi Berra to Cape Canaveral; he could handle any missile.

~Marianne Moore

Men are monopolists of "stars, garters, buttons and other shining baubles"- unfit to be the guardians of another person's happiness.

~Marianne Moore

A man is a writer if all his words are strung in definite sentence sounds.

~Marianne Moore

Truly as the sun can rot or mend, love can make one bestial or make a beast a man.

~Marianne Moore

Dã¼rer would have seen a reason for living in a town like this.

~Marianne Moore

I am hard to disgust, but a pretentious poet can do it

~Marianne Moore

he who gives quickly gives twice / in nothing so much as in a letter.

~Marianne Moore

Honesty - however dangerous - should be as valuable as radium it seems to me.

~Marianne Moore

What I write could only be called poetry because there is no other category to put it.

~Marianne Moore

I wonder what Adam and Eve think of it by this time.

~Marianne Moore

We prove, we do not explain, our birth.

~Marianne Moore

Hindered characters / seldom have mothers / in Irish stories, but they all have grandmothers.

~Marianne Moore

The self does not realize itself most fully when self-realization is its most constant aim.

~Marianne Moore

Concurring hands divide flax for damask that when bleached by Irish weather has the silvered chamois-leather water-tightness of a skin.

~Marianne Moore

The deft white-stockinged dance in thick-soled shoes! Denmark's sanctuaried Jews!

~Marianne Moore

the small tuft of fronds or katydid legs above each eye, still numbering the units in each group; the shadbones regularly set about the mouth, to droop or rise

~Marianne Moore

We don't like flowers that do not wilt; they must die, and nine she-camel hairs aid memory.

~Marianne Moore

Of the crow-blue mussel shells, one keeps adjusting the ash heaps; opening and shutting itself like an injured fan.

~Marianne Moore

What is there in being able to say that one has dominated the stream in an attitude of self-defense; in proving that one has had the experience of carrying a stick?

~Marianne Moore

Sun and moon and day and night and man and beast each with a splendor which man in all his vileness cannot set aside; each with an excellence!

~Marianne Moore

Fanaticism? No. Writing is exciting and baseball is like writing. You can never tell with either how it will go.

~Marianne Moore

They fought the enemy, we fight fat living and self-pity. Shine, o shine, unfalsifying sun, on this sick scene.

~Marianne Moore

A symbol from the first, of mastery, experiments such as Hippocrates made and substituted for vague speculation stayed the ravages of plague.

~Marianne Moore

Maine should be pleased that its animal is not a waverer, and rather than fight, lets the primed quill fall. Shallow oppressor, intruder, insister, you have found a resister.

~Marianne Moore

There is no pleasure subtler than the sensation of being a good workman; and in work there is the sense of consanguinity-unconscious as a rule but sometimes conscious.

~Marianne Moore

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