

Marilynne Robinson

Quotes

*Thinking, People, Reality, World, Children, Eye, Writing, Believe, Memories,
Years, Religious, Book, Loneliness, Mind, Character, Giving, Men, Two, Needs,
Beautiful*

Love is holy because it is like grace--the worthiness of its object is never really what matters.

~Marilynne Robinson

Sometimes I have loved the peacefulness of an ordinary Sunday. It is like standing in a newly planted garden after a warm rain. You can feel the silent and invisible life.

~Marilynne Robinson

Every sorrow suggests a thousand songs and every song recalls a thousand sorrows and so they are infinite in number and all the same.

~Marilynne Robinson

I am grateful for all those dark years, even though in retrospect they seem like a long, bitter prayer that was answered finally.

~Marilynne Robinson

We are part of a mystery, a splendid mystery within which we must attempt to orient ourselves if we are to have a sense of our own nature.

~Marilynne Robinson

This is an interesting planet. It deserves all the attention you can give it.

~Marilynne Robinson

There is more beauty than our eyes can bear, precious things have been put into our hands and to do nothing to honor them is to do great harm.

~Marilynne Robinson

Ordinary things have always seemed numinous to me

~Marilynne Robinson

When we did not move or speak, there was no proof that we were there at all.

~Marilynne Robinson

Because, once alone, it is impossible to believe that one could ever have been otherwise. Loneliness is an absolute discovery.

~Marilynne Robinson

Science can give us knowledge, but it cannot give us wisdom. Nor can religion, until it puts aside nonsense and distraction and becomes itself again.

~Marilynne Robinson

You build your mind, so make it into something you want to live with.

~Marilynne Robinson

It all means more than I can tell you. So you must not judge what I know by what I find words for.

~Marilynne Robinson

The only obligation I recognize is to say what I believe to be true [] and to say it with kindness. I believe that is how a Christian conversation should proceed.

~Marilynne Robinson

There are a thousand thousand reasons to live this life, everyone of them sufficient

~Marilynne Robinson

It's not a man's working hours that is important, it is how he spends his leisure time.

~Marilynne Robinson

I owe everything that I have done to the fact that I am very much at

ease being alone.

~Marilynne Robinson

. . . there is an absolute disjunction between our Father's love and our deserving.

~Marilynne Robinson

There's so much to be grateful for, words are poor things.

~Marilynne Robinson

Memory can make a thing seem to have been much more than it was.

~Marilynne Robinson

A man can know his father, or his son, and there might still be nothing between them but loyalty and love and mutual incomprehension.

~Marilynne Robinson

And often enough, when we think we are protecting ourselves, we are struggling against our rescuer.

~Marilynne Robinson

I do assume that a character or a place is inexhaustible and will always reward further attention.

~Marilynne Robinson

If you had to summarize the Old Testament, the summary would be: stop doing this to yourselves.

~Marilynne Robinson

Memory is the sense of loss, and loss pulls us after it.

~Marilynne Robinson

Generosity is also an act of freedom, a casting off of the constraints of prudence and self-interest.

~Marilynne Robinson

Every spirit passing through the world fingers the tangible and mars the mutable, and finally has come to look and not to buy.

~Marilynne Robinson

Weary or bitter or bewildered as we may be, God is faithful. He lets us wander so we will know what it means to come home.

~Marilynne Robinson

You never know when you might be seeing someone for the last time.

~Marilynne Robinson

He [Christ] even restored the severed ear of the soldier who came to arrest Him - a fact that allows us to hope the resurrection will reflect a considerable attention to detail.

~Marilynne Robinson

For our purposes as human beings, the mind is the center of everything.

~Marilynne Robinson

That is to say, I pray for you. And there's an intimacy in it. That's the truth.

~Marilynne Robinson

I want to feel that art is an utterance made in good faith by one human being to another.

~Marilynne Robinson

We inhabit, we are part of, a reality for which explanation is much too poor and small.

~Marilynne Robinson

... but it's your existence I love you for, mainly. Existence seems to me now the most remarkable thing that could ever be imagined.

~Marilynne Robinson

Nothing true can be said about God from a posture of defense.

~Marilynne Robinson

I don't know exactly what covetous is, but in my experience it is not so much desiring someone else's virtue or happiness as rejecting it, taking offense at the beauty of it.

~Marilynne Robinson

I have always liked the phrase "nursing a grudge " because many people are tender of their resentments as of the thing nearest their hearts.

~Marilynne Robinson

Fiction may be, whatever else, an exercise in the capacity for imaginative love, or sympathy, or identification.

~Marilynne Robinson

It seems to me people tend to forget that we are to love our enemies, not to satisfy some standard of righteousness but because God their Father loves them.

~Marilynne Robinson

Vision sometimes comes in a memory.

~Marilynne Robinson

--"There is no justice in love...it is only the glimpse or parable of an incomprehensible reality... the eternal breaking in on the the temporal.

~Marilynne Robinson

For me writing has always felt like praying even when I wasn't writing

prayers.

~Marilynne Robinson

Rejoice with those who rejoice." I have found that difficult too often. I was much better at weeping with those who weep.

~Marilynne Robinson

I'm amazed at what I have taken for granted. How to truly take in our situation I don't know, but I wish I had started asking myself that question earlier than I did.

~Marilynne Robinson

When things are taking their ordinary course, it is hard to remember what matters.

~Marilynne Robinson

He will wipe the tears from all faces.' It takes nothing from the loveliness of the verse to say that is exactly what will be required

~Marilynne Robinson

Never, ever condescend to the reader. Assume you are writing for someone better and smarter than you are. This will protect you from conventionalism, faddishness, and cliché.

~Marilynne Robinson

I wrote almost all of it in the deepest hope and conviction. Sifting my thoughts and choosing my words. Trying to say what was true. And I'll tell you frankly, that was wonderful.

~Marilynne Robinson

I can't believe we will forget our sorrows altogether. That would mean forgetting that we had lived, humanly speaking. Sorrow seems to me to be a great part of the substance of human life.

~Marilynne Robinson

Grace has a grand laughter in it.

~Marilynne Robinson

The locus of the human mystery is perception of this world. From it proceeds every thought, every art.

~Marilynne Robinson

I got four volumes of the letters and speeches of Oliver Cromwell. He is prominent among the great unread, and treated so oddly by history that I wanted to hear his side of things.

~Marilynne Robinson

I think the essence of family is that you have to agree to it, and then supply, out of your imagination and capacity for loyalty, the contents of it.

~Marilynne Robinson

Fact explains nothing. On the contrary, it is fact that requires explanation.

~Marilynne Robinson

It is hardship that makes clear who the "fighters" are.

~Marilynne Robinson

...not deciding to act would be identical with deciding not to act.

~Marilynne Robinson

It is a good thing to know what it is to be poor, and a better thing if you can do it in company.

~Marilynne Robinson

Salvation was universally considered to be much more becoming in women than in men.

~Marilynne Robinson

It is possible to know the great truths without feeling the truth of them.

~Marilynne Robinson

A letter makes ordinary things seem important.

~Marilynne Robinson

That's one good thing about the way life is, that no one can know you if you don't let them.

~Marilynne Robinson

More generally, people who lived in a period when maternal, infant and childhood mortality were still high would have been tougher than most of us can imagine.

~Marilynne Robinson

Faith takes a great many forms, suited to a variety of sensibilities, and mine happens to suit me very well.

~Marilynne Robinson

The mind has a complex life that can seem quite autonomous - dreams, obsessions, unwilled memory are all instances of this.

~Marilynne Robinson

Limitation is a good discipline because it discourages inappropriate generalization, which distracts attention from the profound, particular complexity that characterizes anything at all.

~Marilynne Robinson

It seems to me some people just go around lookin' to get their faith unsettled. That has been the fashion for the last hundred years or so.

~Marilynne Robinson

Well, but you two are dancing around in your iridescent little downpour, whooping and stomping as sane people ought to do when they

encounter a thing so miraculous as water.

~Marilynne Robinson

It is one of the best traits of good people that they love where they pity. And this is truer of women than of men.

~Marilynne Robinson

I hated waiting. If I had one particular complaint, it was that my life seemed composed entirely of expectation.

~Marilynne Robinson

...if you ever wonder what you've done in your life, and everyone does wonder sooner or later, you have been God's grace to me, a miracle, something more than a miracle.

~Marilynne Robinson

Of my conception I know only what you know of yours. It occurred in darkness and I was unconsenting... By some bleak alchemy what had been mere unbeing becomes death when life is mingled with it.

~Marilynne Robinson

What an embarrassment that was, being somewhere because there was nowhere else for you to be.

~Marilynne Robinson

The old man always said we should attend to the things we have some hope of understanding, and eternity isn't one of them. Well, this world isn't one either.

~Marilynne Robinson

It is diversity that makes any natural system robust, and diversity that stabilizes culture against the eccentricity and arrogance that have so often called themselves reason and science.

~Marilynne Robinson

The best essays come from the moment in which people really need to work something out.

~Marilynne Robinson

A little too much anger, too often or at the wrong time, can destroy more than you would ever imagine.

~Marilynne Robinson

I would advise you against defensiveness on principle. It precludes the best eventualities along with the worst. At the most basic level it expresses a lack of faith.

~Marilynne Robinson

I think the attempt to defend belief can unsettle it, in fact, because there is always an inadequacy in argument about ultimate things.

~Marilynne Robinson

When we accept dismissive judgments of our community we stop having generous hope for it. We cease to be capable of serving its best interests.

~Marilynne Robinson

I do have an impulse to sort of leverage what I say against something I disagree with.

~Marilynne Robinson

pity and charity may be at root an attempt to propitiate the dark powers that have not touched us yet.

~Marilynne Robinson

In eternity this world will be like Troy, I believe, and all that has passed here will be the epic of the universe, the ballad they sing in the streets.

~Marilynne Robinson

It saddens me that Christians need to be reminded that awe is owed also to those who disagree with them, who believe otherwise than they do.

~Marilynne Robinson

I listen to Bach a great deal. In general I like to listen to hymns and liturgical music.

~Marilynne Robinson

When something ought to be true then it proves to be a very powerful truth.

~Marilynne Robinson

Cultures cherish artists because they are people who can say, Look at that.

~Marilynne Robinson

The great truth that is too often forgotten is that it is in the nature of people to do good to one another.

~Marilynne Robinson

People don't acknowledge loneliness in themselves, and don't appreciate its benefits, the reflection and attentiveness that come with it, the deepened acquaintance with oneself.

~Marilynne Robinson

I like a book to be full of the memory of what it is, a voice in an endless conversation, and yet at the same time to be new.

~Marilynne Robinson

Light is constant, we just turn over in it.

~Marilynne Robinson

Fiction that does not acknowledge this at least tacitly is not true.

~Marilynne Robinson

You have to live with your mind your whole life.

~Marilynne Robinson

When my mother left me waiting for her, [she] established in me the habit of waiting and expectation which makes any present moment most significant for what it does not contain.

~Marilynne Robinson

Boughton says he has more ideas about heaven every day. He said, "Mainly I just think about the splendors of the world and multiply by two. I'd multiply by ten or twelve if I had the energy.

~Marilynne Robinson

Two questions I can't really answer about fiction are 1) where it comes from, and 2) why we need it. But that we do create it and also crave it is beyond dispute.

~Marilynne Robinson

Over my life as a teacher, women have been too quiet. I'm quiet myself. I don't think I said three words the whole of graduate school.

~Marilynne Robinson

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