

# Primo Levi

## Quotes

*Men, Country, Way, Heart, Science, Today, Memories, Home, Stories, Air, Law,  
Events, Children, War, Believe, Clothes, Giving, Mean, Honest, Brain*

The aims of life are the best defense against death.

~Primo Levi

Monsters exist, but they are too few in numbers to be truly dangerous. More dangerous are the functionaries ready to believe and act without asking questions.

~Primo Levi

There is Auschwitz, and so there cannot be God.

~Primo Levi

Each of us bears the imprint of a friend met along the way; In each the trace of each.

~Primo Levi

I am constantly amazed by man's inhumanity to man.

~Primo Levi

Everybody is somebody's Jew.

~Primo Levi

A country is considered the more civilised the more the wisdom and efficiency of its laws hinder a weak man from becoming too weak and a powerful one too powerful.

~Primo Levi

Those who deny Auschwitz would be ready to remake it.

~Primo Levi

Perfection belongs to narrated events, not to those we live.

~Primo Levi

Dawn came on us like a betrayer; it seemed as though the new sun rose as an ally of our enemies to assist in our destruction.

~Primo Levi

Man is a centaur, a tangle of flesh and mind, divine inspiration and dust.

~Primo Levi

If a writer is convinced that he is honest, then it is very difficult for him to be a bad writer.

~Primo Levi

Our ignorance allowed us to live, as you are in the mountains, and your rope is frayed and about to break, but you don't know it and feel safe.

~Primo Levi

I live in my house as I live inside my skin: I know more beautiful, more ample, more sturdy and more picturesque skins: but it would seem to me unnatural to exchange them for mine.

~Primo Levi

It is the duty of righteous men to make war on all undeserved privilege, but one must not forget that this is a war without end.

~Primo Levi

If you and your child were going to be killed tomorrow, would you not give him to eat today?

~Primo Levi

I too entered the Lager as a nonbeliever, and as a nonbeliever I was liberated and have lived to this day.

~Primo Levi

The sea's only gifts are harsh blows and, occasionally, the chance to feel strong.

~Primo Levi

Anyone who has obeyed nature by transmitting a piece of gossip experiences the explosive relief that accompanies the satisfying of a primary need.

~Primo Levi

There are few men who know how to go to their deaths with dignity, and often they are not those whom one would expect.

~Primo Levi

I'm a libertine, but it's not my specialty.

~Primo Levi

He could hardly read or write but his heart spoke the language of the good

~Primo Levi

I am not even alive enough to know how to kill myself

~Primo Levi

In history and in life one sometimes seems to glimpse a ferocious law which states: to he that has, will be given; from he that has not, will be taken away.

~Primo Levi

To accuse another of having weak kidneys, lungs, or heart, is not a crime; on the contrary, saying he has a weak brain is a crime.

~Primo Levi

Perhaps Kafka laughed when he told stories [ . . . ] because one isn't always equal to oneself.

~Primo Levi

My number is 174517; we have been baptized, we will carry the tattoo on our left arm until we die.

~Primo Levi

We will not return No one must leave here and so carry to the world, together with the sign impressed on his skin, the evil tidings of what man's presumption made of man in Auschwitz

~Primo Levi

An enemy who sees the error of his ways ceases to be an enemy.

~Primo Levi

For he who loses all often easily loses himself.

~Primo Levi

I have many times been praised for my lack of animosity towards the Germans. It's not a philosophical virtue. It's a habit of having my second reactions before the first.

~Primo Levi

A man who would mutilate himself is well damned, isn't he?

~Primo Levi

The work of bestial degradation, begun by the victorious Germans, had been carried to its conclusion by the Germans in defeat.

~Primo Levi

Today I think that if for no other reason than that an Auschwitz existed, no one in our age should speak of Providence.

~Primo Levi

The living are more demanding; the dead can wait.

~Primo Levi

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