

# Robert Lowell

## Quotes

*Writing, Fishing, Water, August, Swimming, Poetry, Art, Ends, Light, Sweet, Air,  
Eye, Death, Climbing, Giants, Ifs, Inspiration, Moving, Past, Grease*

If youth is a defect, it is one we outgrow too soon.

~Robert Lowell

In the end, there is no end.

~Robert Lowell

We feel the machine slipping from our hands  
As if someone else were steering;  
If we see light at the end of the tunnel,  
It's the light of the oncoming train.

~Robert Lowell

The world is absolutely out of control now  
and is not going to be saved by any reason  
or unreason.

~Robert Lowell

Poetry is not the record of an event:  
it is an event.

~Robert Lowell

Their monument sticks like a fishbone  
in the city's throat.

~Robert Lowell

It is night, And it is vanity, and age  
Blackens the heart of Adam. Fear,  
The yellow chirper, beaks its cage.

~Robert Lowell

History has to live with what was here,  
clutching and close to fumbling  
all we had - it is so dull and gruesome  
how we die, unlike writing, life  
never finishes.

~Robert Lowell

Most poetry is very formal, but when a  
modern poet is formal he gets more  
attention for it than old poets did.

~Robert Lowell

I was overcome with an attack of pathological enthusiasm.

~Robert Lowell

Sometimes nothing is so solid to me as writing - I suppose that's what a vocation means - at times a torment, a bad conscience, but all in all, purpose and direction.

~Robert Lowell

I myself am hell; nobody's here

~Robert Lowell

It's the light of the oncoming train.

~Robert Lowell

Talking about the past is like a cat's trying to explain climbing down a ladder.

~Robert Lowell

Everywhere, giant finned cars nose forward like fish; a savage servility slides by on grease.

~Robert Lowell

Those blessed structures, plot and rhyme-- why are they no help to me now I want to make something imagined, not recalled?

~Robert Lowell

In the end, every hypochondriac is his own prophet.

~Robert Lowell

What can the dove of Jesus give You now but wisdom, exile? Stand and live, The dove has brought an olive branch to eat.

~Robert Lowell

Middle Age At forty-five, What next, what next? At every corner, I meet

my Father, My age, still alive.

~Robert Lowell

Life begins to happen. My hopped up husband drops his home disputes, and hits the streets to cruise for prostitutes

~Robert Lowell

We are all old-timers, each of us holds a locked razor.

~Robert Lowell

September twenty-second, Sir, the bough cracks with unpicked apples, and at dawn the small-mouth bass breaks water, gorged with spawn.

~Robert Lowell

I saw the spiders marching through the air, Swimming from tree to tree that mildewed day In latter August when the hay Came creaking to the barn.

~Robert Lowell

The Lord survives the rainbow of His will.

~Robert Lowell

Pity the planet, all joy gone from this sweet volcanic cone

~Robert Lowell

Once fishing was a rabbit's foot-- O wind blow cold, O wind blow hot

~Robert Lowell

But sometimes everything I write with the threadbare art of my eye seems a snapshot

~Robert Lowell

Wallowing in this bloody sty, I cast for fish that pleased my eye

~Robert Lowell

the scythers, Time and Death, Helmed locusts, move upon the tree of  
breath

~Robert Lowell

I will catch Christ with a greased worm, And when the Prince of  
Darkness stalks My bloodstream to its Stygian term . . . On water the  
Man-Fisher walks.

~Robert Lowell

And blue-lung'd combers lumbered to the kill.

~Robert Lowell

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