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# Quotes by Camus, Albert

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Albert Camus (pronounced Kam-oo, IPA: ka.m) (November 7, 1913 – January 4, 1960) was a French author and philosopher and one of the principal luminaries (with Jean-Paul Sartre) of existentialism. Camus was the second youngest-ever recipient of the Nobel Prize for Literature (after Rudyard Kipling) when he received the award in 1957. He is also the shortest-lived of any literature laureate to date, having died in a car crash 3 years after receiving the award.

At any street corner the feeling of absurdity can strike any man in the face.

- Camus, Albert

To those who despair of everything reason cannot provide a faith, but only passion, and in this case it must be the same passion that lay at the root of the despair, namely humiliation and hatred.

- Camus, Albert

You will never be happy if you continue to search for what happiness consists of. You will never live if you are looking for the meaning of life.

- Camus, Albert

Man is the only creature who refuses to be what he is.

- Camus, Albert

In order to exist just once in the world, it is necessary never again to exist.

- Camus, Albert

You can't create experience. You must undergo it.

- Camus, Albert

Alas after a certain age, every man is responsible for his own face.

- Camus, Albert

We all carry within us our places of exile, our crimes, and our ravages. But our task is not to unleash them on the world; it is to fight them in ourselves and in others.

- Camus, Albert

Absolute virtue is impossible and the republic of forgiveness leads, with implacable logic, to the republic of the guillotine.

- Camus, Albert

Whereas the Greeks gave to will the boundaries of reason, we have come to put the will's impulse in the very center of reason, which has, as a result, become deadly.

- Camus, Albert

Without freedom, no art; art lives only on the restraints it imposes on itself, and dies of all others. But without freedom, no socialism either, except the socialism of the gallows.

- Camus, Albert

The only conception of freedom I can have is that of the prisoner or the individual in the midst of the State. The only one I know is freedom of thought and action.

- Camus, Albert

Freedom is nothing else but a chance to be better.

- Camus, Albert

Don't walk in front of me, I may not follow; Don't walk behind me, I may not lead; Walk beside me, and just be my friend.

- Camus, Albert

The gods had condemned Sisyphus to ceaselessly rolling a rock to the top of a mountain, whence the stone would fall back of its own weight. They had thought with some reason that there is no more dreadful punishment than futile and hopeless labor.

- Camus, Albert

It is normal to give away a little of one's life in order not to lose it all.

- Camus, Albert

That must be wonderful; I have no idea of what it means.

- Camus, Albert

By definition, a government has no conscience. Sometimes it has a policy, but nothing more.

- Camus, Albert

All great deeds and all great thoughts have a ridiculous beginning.

- Camus, Albert

When you have once seen the glow of happiness on the face of a beloved person, you know that a man can have no vocation but to awaken that light on the faces surrounding him; and you are torn by the thought of the unhappiness and night you cast, by the mere fact of living, in the hearts you encounter.

- Camus, Albert

To be happy we must not be too concerned with others.

- Camus, Albert

But what is happiness except the simple harmony between a person and life they lead.

- Camus, Albert

In our wildest aberrations we dream of an equilibrium we have left behind and which we

naively expect to find at the end of our errors. Childish presumption which justifies the fact that child-nations, inheriting our follies, are now directing our history.

- Camus, Albert

Instead of killing and dying in order to produce the being that we are not, we have to live and let live in order to create what we are.

- Camus, Albert

Whoever today speaks of human existence in terms of power, efficiency, and historical tasks is an actual or potential assassin.

- Camus, Albert

Methods of thought which claim to give the lead to our world in the name of revolution have become, in reality, ideologies of consent and not of rebellion.

- Camus, Albert

More and more, when faced with the world of men, the only reaction is one of individualism. Man alone is an end unto himself. Everything one tries to do for the common good ends in failure.

- Camus, Albert

To live is to hurt others, and through others, to hurt oneself. Cruel earth! How can we manage not to touch anything? To find what ultimate exile?

- Camus, Albert

Children will still die unjustly even in a perfect society. Even by his greatest effort, man can only propose to diminish, arithmetically, the sufferings of the world.

- Camus, Albert

The innocent is the person who explains nothing.

- Camus, Albert

There's no need to hang about waiting for the last judgment. It takes place every day.

- Camus, Albert

Accept life, take it as it is? Stupid. The means of doing otherwise? Far from our having to take it, it is life that possesses us and on occasion shuts our mouths.

- Camus, Albert

We get into the habit of living before acquiring the habit of thinking. In that race which daily hastens us towards death, the body maintains its irreparable lead.

- Camus, Albert

Real generosity toward the future lies in giving all to the present.

- Camus, Albert

Men must live and create. Live to the point of tears.

- Camus, Albert

If, after all, men cannot always make history have meaning, they can always act so that their own lives have one.

- Camus, Albert

Man wants to live, but it is useless to hope that this desire will dictate all his actions.

- Camus, Albert

Real nobility is based on scorn, courage, and profound indifference.

- Camus, Albert

The need to be right is the sign of a vulgar mind.

- Camus, Albert

To write is to become disinterested. There is a certain renunciation in art.

- Camus, Albert

It is impossible to give a clear account of the world, but art can teach us to reproduce it --just as the world reproduces itself in the course of its eternal gyrations. The primordial sea indefatigably repeats the same words and casts up the same astonished beings on the same sea-shore.

- Camus, Albert

The desire for possession is insatiable, to such a point that it can survive even love itself.  
To love, therefore, is to sterilize the person one loves.

- Camus, Albert

Martyrs, my friend, have to choose between being forgotten, mocked or used. As for being understood -- never.

- Camus, Albert

Just as all thought, and primarily that of non-signification, signifies something, so there is no art that has no signification.

- Camus, Albert

A free press can, of course, be good or bad, but, most certainly without freedom, the press will never be anything but bad.

- Camus, Albert

To correct a natural indifference I was placed half-way between misery and the sun. Misery kept me from believing that all was well under the sun, and the sun taught me that history wasn't everything.

- Camus, Albert

The modern mind is in complete disarray. Knowledge has stretched itself to the point

where neither the world nor our intelligence can find any foot-hold. It is a fact that we are suffering from nihilism.

- Camus, Albert

It is a kind of spiritual snobbery that makes people think they can be happy without money.

- Camus, Albert

After all, every murderer when he kills runs the risk of the most dreadful of deaths, whereas those who kill him risk nothing except promotion.

- Camus, Albert

Truly fertile Music, the only kind that will move us, that we shall truly appreciate, will be a Music conducive to Dream, which banishes all reason and analysis. One must not wish first to understand and then to feel. Art does not tolerate Reason.

- Camus, Albert

It is a well-known fact that we always recognize our homeland when we are about to lose it.

- Camus, Albert

If only nature is real and if, in nature, only desire and destruction are legitimate, then, in that all humanity does not suffice to assuage the thirst for blood, the path of destruction must lead to universal annihilation.

- Camus, Albert

We come into the world laden with the weight of an infinite necessity.

- Camus, Albert

The world is never quiet, even its silence eternally resounds with the same notes, in vibrations which escape our ears. As for those that we perceive, they carry sounds to us, occasionally a chord, never a melody.

- Camus, Albert

Only a philosophy of eternity, in the world today, could justify non-violence.

- Camus, Albert

Those who weep for the happy periods which they encounter in history acknowledge what they want; not the alleviation but the silencing of misery.

- Camus, Albert

If Christianity is pessimistic as to man, it is optimistic as to human destiny. Well, I can say that, pessimistic as to human destiny, I am optimistic as to man.

- Camus, Albert

We used to wonder where war lived, what it was that made it so vile. And now we realize that we know where it lives, that it is inside ourselves.

- Camus, Albert

Those who lack the courage will always find a philosophy to justify it.

- Camus, Albert

God put self-pity by the side of despair like the cure by the side of the disease.

- Camus, Albert

Politics and the fate of mankind are shaped by men without ideals and without greatness.

Men who have greatness within them don't go in for politics.

- Camus, Albert

In the depth of winter I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer.

- Camus, Albert

The Poor Man whom everyone speaks of, the Poor Man whom everyone pities, one of the repulsive Poor from whom charitable souls keep their distance, he has still said nothing.

Or, rather, he has spoken through the voice of Victor Hugo, Zola, Richepin. At least, they said so. And these shameful impostures fed their authors. Cruel irony, the Poor Man tormented with hunger feeds those who plead his case.

- Camus, Albert

From Paul to Stalin, the popes who have chosen Caesar have prepared the way for

Caesars who quickly learn to despise popes.

- Camus, Albert

To abandon oneself to principles is really to die -- and to die for an impossible love which is the contrary of love.

- Camus, Albert

The principles which men give to themselves end by overwhelming their noblest intentions.

- Camus, Albert

To assert in any case that a man must be absolutely cut off from society because he is absolutely evil amounts to saying that society is absolutely good, and no-one in his right mind will believe this today.

- Camus, Albert

The myth of unlimited production brings war in its train as inevitably as clouds announce a storm.

- Camus, Albert

The society based on production is only productive, not creative.

- Camus, Albert

Retaliation is related to nature and instinct, not to law. Law, by definition, cannot obey the same rules as nature.

- Camus, Albert

Realism should only be the means of expression of religious genius... or, at the other extreme, the artistic expressions of monkeys which are quite satisfied with mere imitation. In fact, art is never realistic though sometimes it is tempted to be. To be really realistic a description would have to be endless.

- Camus, Albert

Every act of rebellion expresses a nostalgia for innocence and an appeal to the essence of being.

- Camus, Albert

What is a rebel? A man who says no.

- Camus, Albert

The rebel can never find peace. He knows what is good and, despite himself, does evil. The value which supports him is never given to him once and for all -- he must fight to uphold it, unceasingly.

- Camus, Albert

Human relationships always help us to carry on because they always presuppose further developments, a future --and also because we live as if our only task was precisely to

have relationships with other people.

- Camus, Albert

Nothing is more despicable than respect based on fear.

- Camus, Albert

Revolution, in order to be creative, cannot do without either a moral or metaphysical rule to balance the insanity of history.

- Camus, Albert

Every revolutionary ends up by becoming either an oppressor or a heretic.

- Camus, Albert

More and more, revolution has found itself delivered into the hands of its bureaucrats and doctrinaires on the one hand, and to the enfeebled and bewildered masses on the other.

- Camus, Albert

As usual I finish the day before the sea, sumptuous this evening beneath the moon, which writes Arab symbols with phosphorescent streaks on the slow swells. There is no end to the sky and the waters. How well they accompany sadness!

- Camus, Albert

To know oneself, one should assert oneself. Psychology is action, not thinking about

oneself. We continue to shape our personality all our life. If we knew ourselves perfectly, we should die.

- Camus, Albert

If there is sin against life, it consists in hoping for another life and in eluding the implacable grandeur of this life.

- Camus, Albert

Ah, mon cher, for anyone who is alone, without God and without a master, the weight of days is dreadful.

- Camus, Albert

The struggle itself towards the heights is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy.

- Camus, Albert

In default of inexhaustible happiness, eternal suffering would at least give us a destiny. But we do not even have that consolation, and our worst agonies come to an end one day.

- Camus, Albert

There is but one truly serious philosophical problem and that is suicide. Judging whether life is or is not worth living amounts to answering the fundamental question of philosophy. All the rest -- whether or not the world has three dimensions, whether the mind has nine

or twelve categories -- comes afterwards. These are games; one must first answer.

- Camus, Albert

Beauty is unbearable, drives us to despair, offering us for a minute the glimpse of an eternity that we should like to stretch out over the whole of time.

- Camus, Albert

At the heart of all beauty lies something inhuman, and these hills, the softness of the sky, the outline of these trees at this very minute lose the illusory meaning with which we had clothed them, henceforth more remote than a lost paradise... that denseness and that strangeness of the world is absurd.

- Camus, Albert

A novel is never anything, but a philosophy put into images.

- Camus, Albert

The most eloquent eulogy of capitalism was made by its greatest enemy. Marx is only anti-capitalist in so far as capitalism is out of date.

- Camus, Albert

We are not certain, we are never certain. If we were we could reach some conclusions, and we could, at last, make others take us seriously.

- Camus, Albert

Integrity has no need of rules.

- Camus, Albert

Charm is a way of getting the answer yes without having asked any clear question.

- Camus, Albert

The society of merchants can be defined as a society in which things disappear in favor of signs. When a ruling class measures its fortunes, not by the acre of land or the ingot of gold, but by the number of figures corresponding ideally to a certain number of exchange operations, it thereby condemns itself to setting a certain kind of humbug at the center of its experience and its universe. A society founded on signs is, in its essence, an artificial society in which man's carnal truth is handled as something artificial.

- Camus, Albert

To insure the adoration of a theorem for any length of time, faith is not enough, a police force is needed as well.

- Camus, Albert

One leader, one people, signifies one master and millions of slaves.

- Camus, Albert

We call first truths those we discover after all the others.

- Camus, Albert

Our civilization survives in the complacency of cowardly or malignant minds -- a sacrifice to the vanity of aging adolescents. In 1953, excess is always a comfort, and sometimes a career.

- Camus, Albert

The real passion of the twentieth century is servitude.

- Camus, Albert

Virtue cannot separate itself from reality without becoming a principle of evil.

- Camus, Albert

Work is nothing but the slow trek to rediscover, through the detours of art, those two or three great images in whose presence 'His Or Her's heart first opened.

- Camus, Albert

The world in which we were called to exist was an absurd world, and there was no other in which we could take refuge.

- Camus, Albert

What the world requires of the Christians is that they should continue to be Christians.

- Camus, Albert

As a remedy to life in society I would suggest the big city. Nowadays, it is the only desert within our means.

- Camus, Albert

A sub-clerk in the post-office is the equal of a conqueror if consciousness is common to them.

- Camus, Albert

For centuries the death penalty, often accompanied by barbarous refinements, has been trying to hold crime in check; yet crime persists. Why? Because the instincts that are warring in man are not, as the law claims, constant forces in a state of equilibrium.

- Camus, Albert

Culture: the cry of men in face of their destiny.

- Camus, Albert

Without culture, and the relative freedom it implies, society, even when perfect, is but a jungle. This is why any authentic creation is a gift to the future.

- Camus, Albert

There will be no lasting peace either in the heart of individuals or in social customs until death is outlawed.

- Camus, Albert

Men are convinced of your arguments, your sincerity, and the seriousness of your efforts only by your death.

- Camus, Albert

Men are never really willing to die except for the sake of freedom: therefore they do not believe in dying completely.

- Camus, Albert

My conclusion will be simple. It will consist of saying, in the very midst of the sound and the fury of our history: Let us rejoice. Let us rejoice, indeed, at having witnessed the death of a lying and comfort-loving Europe and at being faced with cruel truths.

- Camus, Albert

Perhaps we cannot prevent this world from being a world in which children are tortured. But we can reduce the number of tortured children. And if you don't help us, who else in the world can help us do this?

- Camus, Albert

De romanwereld is niets anders dan een correctie op deze wereld, in navolging van het diepe verlangen van de mens.

- Camus, Albert







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