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Quotes by Kafka, Franz

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Franz Kafka (July 3, 1883 June 3, 1924) was one of the major German-language novelists and short story writers of the 20th century, most of whose works were published posthumously. Born in Prague of Jewish descent, his unique body of writing continues to draw interest from critics and readers alike.

I can prove at any time that my education tried to make another person out of me than the one I became. It is for the harm, therefore, that my educators could have done me in accordance with their intentions that I reproach them; I demand from their hands the person I now am, and since they cannot give him to me, I make of my reproach and laughter a drumbeat sounding in the world beyond.

- Kafka, Franz

It is not necessary that you leave the house. Remain at your table and listen. Do not even listen, only wait. Do not even wait, be wholly still and alone. The world will present itself to you for its unmasking, it can do no other, in ecstasy it will writhe at your feet.

- Kafka, Franz

My fear... is my substance, and probably the best part of me.

- Kafka, Franz

From a certain point onward there is no longer any turning back. That is the point that must be reached.

- Kafka, Franz

In theory there is a possibility of perfect happiness: To believe in the indestructible element within one, and not to strive towards it.

- Kafka, Franz

My guiding principle is this: Guilt is never to be doubted.

- Kafka, Franz

May I kiss you then? On this miserable paper? I might as well open the window and kiss the night air.

- Kafka, Franz

Life's splendor forever lies in wait about each one of us in all its fullness, but veiled from view, deep down, invisible, far off. It is there, though, not hostile, not reluctant, not deaf. If you summon it by the right word, by its right name, it will come.

- Kafka, Franz

All human errors are impatience, a premature breaking off of methodical procedure, an apparent fencing-in of what is apparently at issue.

- Kafka, Franz

In science one tries to tell people, in such a way as to be understood by everyone, something that no one ever knew before. But in poetry, it's the exact opposite.

- Kafka, Franz

Anyone who cannot come to terms with his life while he is alive needs one hand to ward off a little his despair over his fate... but with his other hand he can note down what he sees among the ruins.

- Kafka, Franz

Every revolution evaporates and leaves behind only the slime of a new bureaucracy.

- Kafka, Franz

I have the true feeling of myself only when I am unbearably unhappy.

- Kafka, Franz

You can hold yourself back from the sufferings of the world, that is something you are free to do and it accords with your nature, but perhaps this very holding back is the one suffering you could avoid.

- Kafka, Franz

A belief is like a guillotine, just as heavy, just as light.

- Kafka, Franz

A first sign of the beginning of understanding is the wish to die.

- Kafka, Franz

Youth is happy because it has the ability to see beauty. Anyone who keeps the ability to see beauty never grows old.

- Kafka, Franz



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