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Quotes about Prison

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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

In jail a man has no personality. He is a minor disposal problem and a few entries on reports. Nobody cares who loves or hates him, what he looks like, what he did with his life. Nobody reacts to him unless he gives trouble. Nobody abuses him. All that is asked of him is that he go quietly to the right cell and remain quiet when he gets there. There is nothing to fight against, nothing to be mad at. The jailers are quiet men without animosity or sadism. All this stuff you read about men yelling and screaming, beating against the bars, running spoons along them, guards rushing in with clubs -- all that is for the big house. A good jail is one of the quietest places in the world. Life in jail is in suspension.

- Chandler, Raymond

In prison, those things withheld from and denied to the prisoner become precisely what he wants most of all.

- Cleaver, Eldridge

We are all serving a life sentence in the dungeon of the self.

- Connolly, Cyril

We are all conceived in close prison; in our mothers wombs, we are close prisoners all; when we are born, we are born but to the liberty of the house; prisoners still, though within larger walls; and then all our life is but a going out to the place of execution, to death.

- Donne, John

Prison continues, on those who are entrusted to it, a work begun elsewhere, which the whole of society pursues on each individual through innumerable mechanisms of discipline.

- Foucault, Michel

There is a close relationship between flowers and convicts. The fragility and delicacy of the former are of the same nature as the brutal insensitivity of the latter.

- Genet, Jean

I turn and turn in my cell like a fly that doesn't know where to die.

- Gramsci, Antonio

He that is taken and put into prison or chains is not conquered, though overcome; for he is still an enemy.

- Hobbes, Thomas

Such is the remorseless progression of human society, shedding lives and souls as it

goes on its way. It is an ocean into which men sink who have been cast out by the law and consigned, with help most cruelly withheld, to moral death. The sea is the pitiless social darkness into which the penal system casts those it has condemned, an unfathomable waste of misery. The human soul, lost in those depths, may become a corpse. Who shall revive it?

- Hugo, Victor

It isn't true that convicts live like animals: animals have more room to move around.

- Llosa, Mario Vargas

Stone walls do not a prison make nor iron bars a cage; minds innocent and quiet take that for an hermitage.

- Lovelace, Richard

The prisoner is not the one who has committed a crime, but the one who clings to his crime and lives it over and over.

- Miller, Henry

The most anxious man in a prison is the governor.

- Shaw, George Bernard

Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison.

- Thoreau, Henry David

Anyone who has been to an English public school will always feel comparatively at home in prison. It is the people brought up in the gay intimacy of the slums who find prison so soul-destroying.

- Waugh, Evelyn

We who live in prison, and in whose lives there is no event but sorrow, have to measure time by throbs of pain, and the record of bitter moments.

- Wilde, Oscar

I know not whether Laws be right or whether Laws be wrong; all that we know who live in gaol is that the wall is strong; and that each day is like a year, a year whose days are long.

- Wilde, Oscar

A man will be imprisoned in a room with a door that's unlocked and opens inwards; as long as it does not occur to him to pull rather than push.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig



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