

THE NEW NECRONOMICON

a book of familiar quotes from
speculative and imaginative literature

compiled and edited
by
Joseph Sarno

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The broad term of "speculative and imaginative literature" used as the sub-title of this book is meant to cover the following specialized fields of creative writing: Fantasy, Futuristic, Speculative, Fantastic, Horror, Gothic Horror, Space Opera, Sword & Sorcery, and Science Fiction.

At the whim of the editor, authors who are considered specialists in these fields are sometimes represented by their works in other fields.

Joseph Sarno
Chicago, Illinois
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Brian W. ALDISS

Absolute poverty, like absolute power, corrupts absolutely.
- VANGUARD FROM ALPHA

Poul ANDERSON

He had sometimes thought she lived in a child's world, with nothing very well known, but all of it bright and strange.
- BRAIN WAVE

I see the world and man as a flickering in cold and nothingness, empty out to the edge of forever.
- Ibid

Didn't you once call the twentieth century the Era of Bad Manners.
- Ibid

"Sometimes I feel like a louse." He added with a grin, "The rest of the time I do too, but it's fun."
- Ibid

- Gravitation (sun, moon, stars, the tremendous unity which is space-time)
- + Coriolis force (the planet turning, turning, on its way through miles and years)
- + Fluid friction (the oceans grinding, swirling, roaring between narrow straits, spuming and thundering over rock)
- + Temperature differential (sunlight like warm rain, ice and darkness, clouds, mists, wind and storm)
- + Vulcanism (fire deep in the belly of the planet, sliding of unimaginable rock masses, smoke and lava, the raising of new mountains with snow on their shoulders)
- + Chemical reaction (dark swelling soil, exhausted air made live again, rocks red and blue and ocher, life, dreams, death and rebirth and all bright hopes)

EQUALS

This our world, and behold, she is very fair.

- BRAIN WAVE

It takes courage to be kind.
- Ibid

Sheer intelligence counts for less than personality, strength of character, or the simple ability to make decisions and stick by them.

- Ibid

Poul ANDERSON

Throughout history, yielding to an unjustifiable demand for the sake of a few more years of peace has been the first step on a long downward road.

- THE STAR FOX

Law cannot endure without equal justice. The popularity of an argument must be irrelevant. Only the lawful cause may be admitted.

- Ibid

Robert ARNETTE

To defeat darkness, the tools of darkness must be used.

- EMPIRE OF EVIL

Isaac ASIMOV

THE THREE LAWS OF ROBOTICS

1. A robot may not injure a human being, or through inaction allow a human being to come to harm.
2. A robot must obey the orders given it by human beings except where such orders would conflict with the First Law.
3. A robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Laws.

- I, ROBOT

It is no one's privilege to despise another. It is only a hard-won right after long experience.

- C-CHUTE

Violence is the last refuge of the incompetent.

- FOUNDATION

There never can be a man so lost as one who is lost in the vast and intricate corridors of his own lonely mind, where none may reach and none may save. There never was a man so helpless as one who cannot remember.

- PEBBLE IN THE SKY

The facts are a jigsaw puzzle that can fit only one way.

- Ibid

Old men tend to forget what thought was like in their youth; they forget the quickness of the mental jump, the daring of the youthful intuition, the agility of the fresh insight. They become accustomed to the more plodding varieties of reason, and because this is more than made up by the accumulation of experience, old men think themselves wiser than the young.

- Ibid

Alfred BESTER

In the endless universe there is nothing new, nothing different. What may appear exceptional to the minute mind of man may be inevitable to the infinite Eye of God. This strange second in a life, that unusual event, those remarkable coincidences of environment, opportunity, and encounter . . . all may be reproduced over and over on the planet of a sun whose galaxy revolves once in two hundred million years and has revolved nine times already.

There are and have been worlds and cultures without end, each nursing the proud illusion that it is unique in space and time. There have been men without number suffering from the same megalomania; men who imagined themselves unique, irreplaceable, irreproducible. There will be more . . . more plus infinity. This is the story of such a time and such a man . . . The Demolished Man.

- THE DEMOLISHED MAN

The essence of murder never changes. In every era it remains the conflict of the killer against society with the victim as the prize. And the ABC of conflict with society remains constant. Be audacious, be brave, be confident and you will not fail. Against these assets society can have no defense.

- Ibid

If you believe yourself a natural killer, avoid planning too carefully. Leave most to your instinct. Intellect may fail you, but the killer instinct is invincible.

- Ibid

Conceive of a camera with a lens distorted into wild astigmatism so that it can only photograph the same picture over and over — the scene that twisted it into shock. Conceive of a bit of recording crystal, traumatically warped so that it can only reproduce the same fragment of music over and over, the one terrifying phrase it cannot forget.

- Ibid

If a man's got the talent and guts to buck society, he's obviously above average. You want to hold on to him. You straighten him out and turn him into a plus value. Why throw him away? Do that enough and all you've got left are the sheep.

- Ibid

"Listen," he cried in exaltation. "Listen, normals! You must learn what it is. You must learn how it is. You must tear the barriers down. You must tear the veils away. We see the truth you cannot see . . . That there is nothing in man but love and faith, courage and kindness, generosity and sacrifice. All else is only the barrier of your blindness."

- Ibid

Eando BINDER

I'd rather fight than freeze.

- ENSLAVED BRAINS

Jerome BIXBY

Don't all tyrannies? At first, at least? Build beautiful roads?

- SMALL WAR

We revised the world and brought out a new edition, to the accompaniment of anguished bleats from the classicists. Morons yawned of national integrity, as if Earth were still divisible; idiots spoke doubtfully of limited war to achieve honorable ends, and maniacs shouted war to achieve all they desired.

- Ibid

Algernon BLACKWOOD

A dreariness of the grave possessed him. Life was a ghastly fraud! Religion a childish humbug! Everything was merely a trap — a trap of death; a coloured toy that Nature used as a decoy! But a decoy for what? For nothing! There was no meaning in anything. The only real thing was — DEATH. And the happiest people were those who found it soonest.

- THE OCCUPANT OF THE ROOM

To feel interest is to live, and to love life.

- Ibid

James BLISH

To understand a language on its own terms, without having to put it back into English in one's own mind, is an ability that is won only with difficulty and long practice.

- COMMON TIME

A spindizzy going sour makes the galaxy's most unerving noise. The top range of the sound is inaudible, but it feels like a multiple toothache. Just below that, there is a screech like metal tearing, which blends smoothly into a composite catarach of plate glass, slate, and boulders; this is the middle register. After that, there is a painful gap in the sound's spectrum, and the rest of the noise comes into one's ears again with a hollow round dinosaurian sob and plummets on down into the subsonics, ending in frequencies which induce diarrhea and an almost unconquerable urge to bite one's thumbs.

- EARTHMAN, COME HOME

James BLISH

They had lived together a long time — long enough to learn what learning is, long enough to know that, just as habit is second nature, so nature — the seven steps from chance to meaning — is first habit.

- EARTHMAN, COME HOME

A short lifespan leads to restlessness; somewhere within the next few years, there has to be some El Dorado for the ephemerid. But the conquest of age had almost eliminated that Faustian frenzy. After three or four centuries, people grew tired of searching for the unnamable; they learned — they began to think of the future not as holding a haven of placidity and riches, but simply as the realm of things that had not happened yet. They became interested in the budding, the unfolding present, and thought about the future only with an attitude of indifferent acceptance toward whatever catastrophe it might bring. They no longer burned out their lives seeking catastrophe under the name of "security". In short, they grew a little more realistic, and more than a little tired.

- Ibid

Earth is more than just one little planet, buried in another galaxy than this. Earth is much more important than that. Earth isn't a place. It's an idea.

- Ibid

Anthony BOUCHER

Eliminate the impossible. Then if nothing remains, some part of the "impossible" must be possible.

- ROCKET TO THE MORGUE

Murder's like suicide. Or writing. The more you talk about it, the less apt you are to do it.

- Ibid

Another man's shop talk, if the man is intelligent, is the most interesting listening to be found.

- Ibid

I was deciding to invent a new slogan for the Service: "You can't call yourself an astrogator until you've had your first crash-landing." By which standard I would be the only astrogator in the Galaxy.

- CONQUEST

Ray BRADBURY

Doesn't an old thing always know when a new thing comes.

- AND THE MOON BE STILL AS BRIGHT

Anything that's strange is no good to the average American. If it doesn't have Chicago plumbing, it's nonsense.

- Ibid

The men of Earth came to Mars. They came because they were afraid or unafraid, because they were happy or unhappy, because they felt like Pilgrims or did not feel like Pilgrims. There was a reason for each man. They were leaving bad wives or bad jobs or bad towns; they were coming to find something or leave something or get something, to dig up something or bury something or leave something alone. They were coming with small dreams or large dreams or none at all.

- THE SETTLERS

An old man needs to have things different. Young people don't want to talk to him, other old people bore hell out of him. So I thought the best thing for me is a place so different that all you got to do is open your eyes and you're entertained.

- NIGHT MEETING

There was a smell of Time in the air tonight. He smiled and turned the fancy in his mind. There was a thought. What did Time smell like? Like dust and clocks and people. And if you wondered what Time sounded like it sounded like water running in a dark cave and voices crying and dirt dropping down upon hollow box lids, and rain. And, going further, what did Time look like? Time looked like snow dropping silently into a black room or it looked like a silent film in an ancient theater, one hundred billion faces falling like those New Year balloons, down and down into nothing. That was how Time smelled and looked and sounded.

- Ibid

If you can't have the reality, a dream is just as good.

- THE MARTIAN

We've been contemplating our mechanical, electronic navels for too long.

- THE VELDT

When life is over it is like a flicker of bright film, an instant on the screen, all of its prejudices and pangs condensed and illumined for an instant of space, and before you could cry out, "There was a happy day, there a bad one, there an evil face, there a good one," the film burned to a cinder, the screen went dark.

- KALEIDOSCOPE

Ray BRADBURY

When I'm in Boston, New York is dead. When I'm in New York, Boston is dead. When I don't see a man for a day, he's dead. When he comes walking down the street, my God, it's a resurrection. I do a dance, almost, I'm so glad to see him. I used to, anyway. I don't dance any more. I just look. And when the man walks off, he's dead again.

- NO PARTICULAR NIGHT OR MORNING

Memories, as my father once said, are porcupines. To hell with them! Stay away from them. They make you unhappy. They ruin your work. They make you cry. - Ibid

There isn't any season here; winter and summer are gone. So is spring, and autumn. It isn't any particular night or morning; it's space and space. The only thing right now is you and me and this rocket ship. And the only thing I'm positive of is me. That's all of it.

- Ibid

I've always figured it that you die each day and each day is a box, you see, all numbered and neat; but never go back and lift the lids, because you've died a couple of thousand times in your life, and that's a lot of corpses, each dead a different way, each with a worse expression. Each of those days is a different you, somebody you don't know or understand or want to understand.

- Ibid

Space was a black mossed well where life drowned its roars and terrors.

- THE GOLDEN APPLES OF THE SUN

He felt his smile slide away, melt, fold over and down on itself like a tallow skin, like the stuff of a fantastic candle burning too long and now collapsing and now blown out.

- FAHRENHEIT 451

The zipper displaces the button and a man lacks just that much time to think while dressing at dawn, a philosophical hour, and thus a melancholy hour.

- Ibid

You're afraid of making mistakes. Don't be. Mistakes can be profited by. Man, when I was younger I shoved my ignorance in people's faces. They beat me with sticks. By the time I was forty my blunt instrument had been honed to a fine cutting point for me. If you hide your ignorance, no one will hit you and you'll never learn.

- Ibid

Grandfather's been dead for all these years, but if you lifted my skull, by God, in the convolutions of my brain you'd find the big ridges of his thumbprint. He touched me.

- Ibid

Ray BRADBURY

Now, a full three seconds, all of the time in history, before the bombs struck, the enemy ships themselves were gone half around the visible world, like bullets in which a savage islander might not believe because they were invisible; yet the heart is suddenly shattered, the body falls in separate motions and the blood is astonished to be freed on the air; the brain squanders its few precious memories and, puzzled, dies.

- FAHRENHEIT 451

It seemed you did more planning in autumn than any other season. This had to do with dying, perhaps. You thought of death and you automatically planned.

- THE PLAYGROUND

"To make the commonplace miraculous, to make the miraculous commonplace. I have always told myself: there is a bit of the known in the unknown, there is a bit of the unknown in the known; look for it; find it. One need not turn upside down to see the world differently. All it takes is a tilt of the head, an inch to this side or that."

- from introduction ABOUT RAY BRADBURY
FAHRENHEIT 451

... that country where it is always turning late in the year. That country where the hills are fog and the rivers are mist; where noons go quickly, dusks and twilights linger, and midnights stay. That country composed in the main of cellars, sub-cellars, coal-bins, closets, attics, and pantries faced away from the sun. That country whose people are autumn people, thinking only autumn thoughts. Whose people passing at night on the empty walks sound like rain.

- THE OCTOBER COUNTRY

Believe in one thing too much and you have no room for new ideas.

- THE NEXT IN LINE

It was one of those things they kept in a jar in the tent of a side-show on the outskirts of a little, drowsy town. One of those pale things drifting in alcohol plasma, forever dreaming and circling, with its peeled, dead eyes staring out at you and never seeing you.

- THE JAR

The first thing you learn in life is you're a fool. The last thing you learn in life is you're the same fool.

- DANDELION WINE

I don't want any Halloween parties here tomorrow. Don't want anyone saying anything sweet about me; I said it all in my time and my pride. I've tasted every victual and danced every dance; Now there's one last tart I haven't bit on, one tune I haven't whistled. Death won't get a crumb by my mouth I won't keep and savor.

- Ibid

Ray BRADBURY

Here was all of Time compressed in a Japanese paper flower.

- A SCENT OF SARSAPARILLA

Here, in prised chandelier, were rainbows and mornings and noons as bright as new rivers flowing endlessly back through time. His flashlight caught and flickered them alive, the rainbows leapt up to curve the shadows back with colors, with colors like plums and strawberries and concord grapes, with colors like cut lemons and the sky where the clouds drew off after storming and the blue was there. And the dust of the attic was incense, burning, and all of time burning, and all you need do was peer into the flames.

- Ibid

God, how we get our fingers in each other's clay. That's friendship, each playing the potter to see what shapes we can make of the other.

- SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES

The trouble with Jim was he looked at the world and could not look away. And when you never look away all your life, by the time you are thirteen you have done twenty years taking in the laundry of the world.

- Ibid

... what strange wonderful clocks women are. They nest in Time. They make the flesh that holds fast and binds eternity. They live inside the gift, know power, accept, and need not mention it. Why speak of Time when you are Time, and shape the universal moments, as they pass, into warmth and action? How men envy and often hate these warm clocks, these wives, who know they will live forever. So what do we do? We men turn terribly mean, because we can't hold to the world or ourselves or anything. We are blind to continuity, all breaks down, falls, melts, stops, rots, or runs away.

- SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES

Death makes everything else sad. But death itself only scares. If there wasn't death, all the other things wouldn't get tainted.

- Ibid

Life in the end seemed a prank of such size you could only stand off at this end of the corridor to note its meaningless length and its quite unnecessary height, a mountain built to such ridiculous immensities you were dwarfed in its shadow and mocking of its pomp.

- Ibid

Ray BRADBURY

Science-fiction is the law-abiding citizen of imaginative literature, obeying the rules, be they physical, social, or psychological, keeping regular hours, eating punctual meals; predictable, certain, sure.

Fantasy, on the other hand, is criminal. Each fantasy assaults and breaks a particular law; the crime being hidden by the author's felicitous thought and style which cover the body before blood is seen.

Science-fiction works hand-in-glove with the universe.

Fantasy cracks it down the middle, turns it wrong-side-out, dissolves it to invisibility ...

Science-fiction balances you on the cliff.

Fantasy shoves you off.

- introduction to 1956 anthology
THE CIRCUS OF DR. LAO
AND OTHER IMPROBABLE STORIES

We all try to sense this world with eye, ear, nose, and mouth; our hand fumbles with the slippery stuff of this material existence which, while mysterious, seems far more understandable, real, concrete, than other men's minds. We all wish to accumulate sensation and use it to build some temporary redoubt.

- Ibid

Man should not live to keep any single political or philosophical architecture neat, clean, and impregnable; rather such frameworks should exist for use, to be razed and burnt, once their time is past.

- Ibid

We feel the need to wake or sleep, eat or fast, accept or reject existence. We embrace the golden cocktail-hour image of ourselves, or tremble at the stark three-o'clock of a sleepless morning reflection we find in our bedroom mirror. Somewhere between lies truth. Searching for the mean, our arts follow cycles of vigorous and brutal certainty, of tenuous theory and dream.

- Ibid

The miracle is not that we have done so much with our world, but that we ever did anything.

- introduction to 1951 anthology
TIMELESS STORIES
FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

Somehow, though, I am compensated by allowing myself to believe that while the scientific man can tell you the exact size, location, pulse, musculature and color of the heart, we emotionalists can find and touch it quicker.

- Ibid

Fredric Brown

He shook his head in blank bewilderment. Criminals taking over forty-second street! Purple denizens of the moon walking down the main drag of Greenville! General Eisenhower in charge of Venus Sector of Earth's space fleet in the war with Arcturus!

What mad universe was he in?

- WHAT MAD UNIVERSE

The Martians had the silly idea that they didn't want to be colonized. They had, it turned out, a civilization at least equal to ours, except that they had not discovered space travel — possibly because, wearing no clothes, they had not developed sewing machines.

- WHAT MAD UNIVERSE

Could this be some fantastic movie or story or book he'd tangled himself into on some quasi-plane of reality? Why not? Dopelle, he thought, was too perfect, too fantastic a character to be true. He didn't even sound like something out of a pulp magazine. No editor in his right mind would accept a story dealing with so improbable a character. Certainly no editor editing anything above the mental level of a comic book would accept Dopelle as a character.

And if this universe he found himself in was too screwy for fiction, how could he accept it as reality?

- Ibid

"Dimension is merely an attribute of a universe," Mekky said, "having validity only within that particular universe. From elsewhere, a universe — itself an infinity of space — is but a point, a dimensionless point.

There are an infinite number of points on the head of a pin. There are as many points on the head of a pin, therefore, as in an infinite universe — or in an infinity of infinite universes. And infinity to the infinite power is still only infinity.

- Ibid

There are an infinite number of coexistent universes. They include this one and the one you came from. They are equally real, and equally true. But do you conceive what an infinity of universes mean? It means that out of infinity, all conceivable universes exist.

There is, for instance, a universe in which this exact scene is being repeated except that you — or the equivalent of you — are wearing brown shoes instead of black ones.

There are an infinite number of permutations of that variation, such as one in which you have a slight scratch on your left forefinger and one in which you have purple horns.

- Ibid

There is a universe in which Huckleberry Finn is a real person, doing the exact things Mark Twain described him as doing. There are, in fact, an infinite number of universes in which a Huckleberry Finn is doing every possible variation of what Mark Twain might have described him as doing. No matter what variation, major or minor, Mark Twain might have made in the writing of that book it would have been true.

- Ibid

Fredric Brown

Universe a la Doppelberg.

- WHAT MAD UNIVERSE

Maybe I weaved just a little, for at just that stage I'm never quite as sober as I am later on. But my mind — ah, it was in that delightful state of being crystal clear in the center and fuzzy around the edges, the state that every moderate drinker knows but can't explain or define, the state that makes even a Carmel City seem delightful and such things as its squalid politics amusing.

- NIGHT OF THE JABBERWOCK

Why, reading a book is almost as good as listening to the man who wrote it talking to you. Better, in one way, because you don't have to be polite to him. You can shut him up any moment you feel so inclined and pick someone else instead. And you can take off your shoes and put your feet on the table.

- Ibid

I remember how crystal clear my mind seemed to be — but of course nothing seems more crystal clear than a prism that makes you see around corners.

- Ibid

I stood there at the bottom of my back steps, looking up at the black velvet sky, star-studded but moonless, and wondering what was behind it and why madmen were mad. And how strange it would be if one of them was right and all the rest of us were crazy instead.

- Ibid

people are more human than anybody. - Ibid

The older you get the less afraid of ghosts you are — whether you believe in them or not. By the time you pass the fifty mark you've known so many people who are now dead that ghosts, if there are any such, aren't all strangers. Some of your best friends are ghosts; why should you be afraid of them? And it's not too many years before you'll be on the other side of the fence yourself.

- Ibid

There ought to be a Rorschach tests with flickering shadows; what the mind would make of them ought to be a lot more revealing than what the mind makes out of ink blots.

- Ibid

You know how it is sometimes when you're drunk, but not too drunk, you think you're trembling on the verge of understanding something important and cosmic that has eluded you all your life?

- Ibid

Fredric BROWN

What, then, is man? Men are pawns, in games of — to you — unbelievable complexity, between the red and the black, the white and the black, for amusement. Played by one part of an organism against another part, to while away an instant of eternity. There are vaster games, played between galaxies. Not with man.

- COME AND GO MAD

Man is a blind alley in evolution, who came to late to compete, who has always been controlled and played with by The Brightly shining, which was old and wise before man walked erect. Man is a parasite upon a planet populated before he came, populated by a Being that is one and many, a billion cells but a single mind, a single intelligence, a single will — as is true of every other populated planet in the universe. Man is a joke, a clown, a parasite. He is nothing; he will be less. Come and go mad.

- Ibid

Like many hedonistic and highly sexed men, he basically disliked women. He liked to use their bodies but had only contempt for them otherwise. Sleep with one, yes. Live with one, never. So much simpler when one could afford it, as he'd been able to do although not as often as he liked for several years now, just to pay a woman for the use of her body than to go through the boring motions of being nice to one so you could talk her into bed free. And, if he wanted a rematch, having to try to please her as well as himself; that took two-thirds of the pleasure away.

- MADBALL

It's indecent and inhuman to put full length mirrors in bathroom doors. They cause narcissism in the young and unhappiness in the old.

- THE LIGHTS IN THE SKY ARE STARS

Where there is no fear there can be no bravery.

- Ibid

A man should never own more stuff than he can carry in his hands at a dead run.

- Ibid

In science fiction nothing is taken for granted; in fantasy nothing requires explanation.

- Introduction to
ANGELS AND SPACESHIPS

But why are we wasting time, I in writing an introduction and you in reading one? I'll stop if you will.

- Ibid

Fredric BROWN

Placet is the only known planet that can eclipse itself twice at the same time, run headlong into itself every forty hours, and then chase itself out of sight. - PLACET IS A CRAZY PLACE

All performances are ended. - ARMAGEDDON

Life is dynamic; it can never be static — at however high or low a level — and survive. - LETTER TO A PHOENIX

In all the universe only the human race has ever reached a high level of intelligence without reaching a high level of sanity. We are unique. We are already at least five times as old as any other race has ever been and it is because we are not sane. And man has, at times, had glimmerings of the fact that insanity is divine.

- Ibid

Face a man, or woman, with something he doesn't understand, and he'll be miserable until he classifies it. ... Anything with a name can be assimilated. ... Even something as familiar as a commonplace ghoul. Graves in a cemetery dug up, corpses eaten. Horrible thing, it may be; but it's merely a ghoul; as long as it's named — But suppose, if you can stand it, there was no such word as ghoul and no concept of one. Then dug-up half-eaten corpses are found. Nameless horror!

- THE ANGELIC ANGLEWORM

Psychiatrists often misinterpret a sense of humor.

- Ibid

Algis J. BUDRYS

I have set my hand on today, but I have not presumed upon tomorrow.
-Theodore Berendtsen
SOME WILL NOT DIE

I tend to feel that anything in a story has to work; that it has to perform work. It should not be there for decorative purposes, however well done or however charming the possibilities for decoration seem to you as you set out to write it. I tend to feel that first you accomplish the primary purpose and then you decorate it.

- panel discussion CHICON III

Thomas BURKE

Purpose is pursuing impulse. - JOHNSON LOOKED BACK

Thomas BURKE

Alleys hold fear more firmly than open streets. Fear gets clotted in their recesses and hangs there like cobwebs.

- JOHNSON LOOKED BACK

You might as well give up padding through the alleys. Their universe of yellow-spotted blackness is only deluding you with hope of refuge. No corner is dark enough to hide you from eyes that live in darkness. No doors can cover you from senses as keen as air. No turn that you take will carry you farther from him; you are taking the turns he wants you to take.

- Ibid

Lewis CARROL

(1832-1898)

"You are old, Father William," the young man said,
"And your hair has become very white;
And yet you incessantly stand on your head —
Do you think, at your age, it is right?"

- ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND

"Tut, tut, child," said the Duchess. "Everything's got a moral if only you can find it."

- Ibid

Take care of the sense and the sounds will take care of themselves.

- Ibid

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!" - THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

"It's a poor sort of memory that only works backwards."

- Ibid

It's as large as life and twice as natural.

- Ibid

"When I use a word," Humpty-Dumpty said, "It means just what I choose it to mean — nothing more nor less."

- Ibid

Sidney CARROLL

It is a perverse fact that of all the images man continues to make of man, the one which resembles him the least is the one which is intended to resemble him the most — namely, the doll. Nobody can make a doll that looks as if it breathes.

- NONE BEFORE ME

John COLLIER

There was a young man who was invariably spurned by the girls, not because he smelt at all bad, but because he happened to be as ugly as a monkey. He had a good heart, but this soured it, and though he would grudgingly admit that the female kind was very agreeable in shape, size and texture, he thought in all other respects they were the most stupid, blind, perverse, and ill-natured bitches that had ever infested the earth.

- THE DEVIL GEORGE AND ROSIE

There are certain people who do not come to full flower until they are well over fifty. Among these are all males named Murchison.

- GREAT POSSIBILITIES

John Keir CROSS

There are things that are funny so that you laugh at them, and there are things that are funny but you don't laugh at them at all — at least, if you do, you aren't laughing because they amuse you: you are doing what Bergson says you do when you laugh — you are snarling. You are up against something you don't understand — or something you understand too well, but don't want to give in to. It's the other side of the familiar thing — the shadow turned inside out — the dog beneath the skin of the dog beneath the skin.

- THE GLASS EYE

Roald DAHL

I find that writing is a most salutary occupation at a time like this, and I spend many hours each day playing with sentences. I regard each sentence as a little wheel, and my ambition lately has been to gather several hundred of them together at once and to fit them all end to end, with the cogs interlocking, like gears, but each wheel a different size, each turning at a different speed. Now and again I try to put a really big one right next to a very small one in such a way that the big one, turning slowly, will make the small one spin so fast that it hums. Very tricky, that.

- GEORGY PORGY

L. Sprague de CAMP

He reflected that there was this good in Christianity: By its concepts of the Millennium and Judgment Day it accustomed people to looking forward in a way that the older religions did not, and so prepared their minds for the conceptions of organic evolution and scientific progress.

- LEST DARKNESS FALL

John & Dorothy deCOURCY

It is only an alien who can really enjoy the exotic, but the alien who has no connection with the scene, who has not even the vaguest idea what will come next, he truly experiences an unusual and wonderful thing for he smells strange smells, touches strange textures, hears strange sounds and the very air he breathes is somehow different.

- ALCHEMY

Samuel R. DELANY

You are trapped in that bright moment where you learned your doom.

- CITY OF A THOUSAND SUNS

When what is is congruent to what is supposed, the reaction is functional and the mental processes competent. When what is and what is supposed have nothing to do with each other, the choice of reactions is random. Stay or run, laugh or frown: the decision is chance.

- Ibid

When confusion is great enough, the odds are for at least a few people moving in the same direction. Human beings being what they are, order spreads given half a chance, almost as fast as confusion.

- Ibid

... a poet is wounded into speech, and he examines these wounds, meticulously, to discover how to heal them. The bad poet harangues at the pain and yowls at the weapons that lacerate him; the great poet explores the inflamed lips of ruined flesh with ice-covered fingers, glittering and precise; but ultimately their poem is the echoing, dual voice reporting the damage.

- Ibid

Philip K. DICK

Nobody can have absolute knowledge about the future. By definition, the future hasn't happened. And if knowledge existed, it would change the future — which would make the knowledge invalid.

- THE WORLD JONES MADE

Philip K. DICK

Sometimes I think women are totally passive receptors, like pieces of litmus paper.

- THE WORLD JONES MADE

Steve DITKO

To have any sympathy for a killer is an insult to their victims.

- MR. A

E. R. EDDISON

An atheistical Creator is a contradiction. But is not reality, the nearer you get to the heart of it, framed of contradictions?

- A FISH DINNER IN MEMISON

Robert FARADAY

Every man is many things. His potential is unlimited. It is only when he draws fences around himself and confines himself to the present form of corporeality that he ceases to be master of his destiny.

- THE ANYTIME RINGS

Philip Jose FARMER

THERE ARE UNIVERSES BEGGING FOR GODS yet He hangs around this one looking for work.

- RIDERS OF THE PURPLE WAGE

Time has preserved several of its original policies, that is, truth and objectivity must be sacrificed for the sake of a witticism and science-fiction must be put down.

- Ibid

Charles G. FINNEY

Great Mother Nature — she created snowfields for polar bears and pinewoods for black bears and mountains for grizzly bears and toyshops for teddy bears.

- THE CIRCUS OF DR. LAO

God must have loved ugly animals, he made so many of them.

- Ibid

Charles G. FINNEY

The Code of the West hints that snakes ought to be killed on sight, which is one of the few flaws in that great document.

- THE HORSENAPIING OF HOTSPUR

Daniel F. GALOUYE

If he had been able to listen beyond the lobe of his ear ...

- DARK UNIVERSE

His eyes swept the great dome covering this infinity and, breathless, he gave up trying to count the lively little points of light that danced around up there and became stronger or weaker as he studied them.

Beyond and between the gay motes of the dome was a somber darkness that reminded him of the corridors and worlds in which he had spent all his life up until now. But the fascinating bits of light were so elegant that the eye found little time to concern itself with the intervening darkness.

- Ibid

William GOLDING

Suddenly, pacing by the water, he was overcome with astonishment. He found himself understanding the wearisomeness of this life, where every path was an improvisation and a considerable part of one's waking life was spent watching one's feet.

- LORD OF THE FLIES

If faces were different when lit from above or below — what was a face? What was anything?

- Ibid

"Fancy thinking the Beast was something you could hunt and kill!" said the head. For a moment or two the forest and all the other dimly appreciated places echoed with the parody of laughter. "You knew, didn't you? I'm part of you? Close, close, close! I'm the reason why it's no go? Why things are what they are?"

- Ibid

James E. GUNN

The girl you marry and the woman you're married to are two different people.

- MISOGYNIST

Nathaniel HAWTHORNE

Let the heart have its voice here as well as the intellect. And as for ripeness, and as for progress, let mankind always do the highest, kindest, noblest thing, at any given period, it has attained the perception of; and surely that thing cannot be wrong or wrongly timed.

- EARTH'S HOLOCAUST

Robert A. HEINLEIN

Most women are damn fools and children. But they've got more range than we've got. The brave ones are braver, the good ones are better — and the vile ones are viler. - THE PUPPET MASTERS

I'd call a hunch the result of automatic reasoning below the conscious level on data you did not know you possessed.

- Ibid

The price of freedom is the willingness to do sudden battle, anywhere, any time, and with utter recklessness.

- Ibid

The receptionist at the Mutual Assurance Company was a fine example of the beauty of functional design. In spite of being streamlined for about Mach Four, she displayed frontal-mounted radar housings and everything else needed for her basic mission.

- THE DOOR INTO SUMMER

Engineering is the art of the practical and depends more on the total state of the art than it does on the individual engineer.

- Ibid

A wise man should be prepared to abandon his baggage at any time.

- Ibid

... borrowing money is like trying to swim with a brick in each hand.

- Ibid

The city — if you can call Great Los Angeles a city; it is more of a condition — had been chocked when I went to sleep; now it was as jammed as a lady's purse.

- Ibid

Good beer buddies are hard to come by.

- Ibid

He lectured on the mathematics of time theory and temporal displacement ... he would start a paragraph with, "It is therefore obvious -----" and go on from there to matters which may have been obvious to him and God but to no one else.

- Ibid

Robert A. HEINLEIN

Anyone who clings to the historically untrue — and thoroughly immoral — doctrine that "violence never settles anything" I would advise to conjure up the ghosts of Napoleon Bonaparte and of the Duke of Wellington and let them debate it. The ghost of Hitler could referee, and the jury might well be the Dodo, the Great Auk, and the Passenger Pigeon. Violence, naked force, has settled more issues in history than has any other factor, and the contrary opinion is wishful thinking at its worst. Breeds that forget this basic truth have always paid for it with their lives and freedoms.

- STARSHIP TROOPERS

Basic truths cannot change and once a man of insight expresses one of them it is never necessary, no matter how much the world changes, to reformulate them. This is an immutable, true everywhere, throughout all time, for all men and all nations.

- Ibid

Marriage is a young man's disaster and an old man's comfort.

- Ibid

The universe is what it is, not what we want it to be.

- Ibid

Man is what he is, a wild animal with the will to survive, and (so far) the ability, against all competition. Unless one accepts that, anything one says about morals, war, politics — you name it — is nonsense. Correct morals arise from knowing what Man is — not what do-gooders and well-meaning old Aunt Nellies would like him to be. The universe will let us know — later — whether or not Man has any "right" to expand through it.

- Ibid

I've never understood how God could expect his creatures to pick the one true religion by faith — it strikes me as a sloppy way to run a universe.

- STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND

... long ago he had made a pact with himself to postulate a created Universe on even-numbered days, a tail-swallowing eternal-and-uncreated Universe on odd-numbered days — since each hypothesis, whole paradoxical, avoided the paradoxes of the other — with a day off each leap year for sheer solipsist debauchery. Having tabled an unanswerable question he had given no thought to it for more than a generation.

- Ibid

Robert A. HEINLEIN

Man is the animal that laughs. - STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND

Faith strikes me as intellectual laziness.

- Ibid

'Grok' means to understand so thoroughly that the observer becomes a part of the observed — to merge, blend, intermarry, lose identity in group experience. It means almost everything we mean by religion, philosophy, and science — and it means as little to us as color means to a blind man.

- Ibid

Being religious is often a form of conceit.

- Ibid

Religion is a null area in the law. A church can do anything any organization can do — and has no restrictions. It pays no taxes, need not publish records, is effectively immune to search, inspection, or control — and a church is anything that calls itself a church. Attempts have been made to distinguish between "real" religions entitled to immunities, and "cults". It can't be done, short of establishing a state religion ... a cure worse than the disease.

- Ibid

Of all the nonsense that twists the world, the concept of "altruism" is the worst. People do what they want to, every time. If it pains them to make a choice — if the choice looks like a "sacrifice" — you can be sure that it is no nobler than the discomfort caused by greediness ... the necessity of deciding between two things you want when you can't have both.

- Ibid

I recognize your necessity, even though I disagree.

- Ibid

... little imp with lively legs and lovely lewd lascivious lecherous licentious libido ...

- Ibid

I've found out why people laugh. They laugh because it hurts ... because it's the only thing that'll make it stop hurting.

- Ibid

Robert A. HEINLEIN

An artist can look at a pretty girl and see how she will become. A better artist can look at a girl and see the pretty girl she used to be. A great artist can look at an old woman, portray her exactly as she is ... and force the viewer to see the pretty girl she used to be ... more than that, he can make anyone with the sensitivity of an armadillo see that this lovely young girl is still alive, prisoned inside her ruined body. He can make you feel the quiet, endless tragedy that there was never a girl born who ever grew older than eighteen in her heart ... no matter what the merciless hours have done.

- STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND

Obscurity is the refuge of incompetence.

- Ibid

'Love' is that condition in which the happiness of another person is essential to your own.

- Ibid

I am, by profession, a mirror. - Ibid

The ethics of sex is a thorny problem. Each of us is forced to grope for a solution he can live with — in the face of a preposterous, unworkable, and evil code of so-called 'Morals'. Most of us know the code is wrong, almost everybody breaks it. But we pay Danegeld by feeling guilty and giving lip service. Willy-nilly, the code rides us, dead and stinking, an albatross around the neck.

- Ibid

Come Judgment Day, if they hold it, we may find that Mumbo Jumbo the God of the Congo was Big Boss all along.

- Ibid

You have to give an editor something to change, or he gets frustrated. After he pees in it, he likes the flavor, so he buys it.

- Ibid

Logic is a feeble reed, friend. "Logic" proved that airplanes can't fly and that H-bombs won't work and that stones don't fall out of the sky. Logic is a way of saying that anything which didn't happen yesterday won't happen tomorrow. - GLORY ROAD

I had fallen into a book. ... I hoped it was a success and that the writer would keep me alive for lots of sequels. It was a pretty nice deal for the hero, up to this chapter at least.

- Ibid

Robert A. HARRISON

A man who always obeys the law is a man who never works it every chance.

An insult is like a drink; it affects one only if accepted. And pride is too heavy baggage for my journey.

- Ibid

Center is such a hash of cultures, races, customs, and styles that it has few rules. The one invariant custom was: Don't impose your customs on me.

- Ibid

She believed that a woman's costume was a failure unless it made men want to tear it off.

- Ibid

As courage is bravery in the face of fear, virtue is right conduct in the face of temptation. If there is no temptation, there can be no virtue.

- Ibid

Vice requires constant practice.

- Ibid

A democratic form of government is okay, as long as it doesn't work. Any social organization does well enough if it isn't rigid. The framework doesn't matter as long as there is enough looseness to permit that one man in a multitude to display his genius. Most so-called social scientists seem to think that organization is everything. It is almost nothing -- except when it is a straitjacket.

- Ibid

To claim to "respect" and even to "love" the great mass with their yaps at one end and smelly feet at the other requires the fatuous, uncritical, saccharine, blind, sentimental slobbishness found in some nursery supervisors, most spaniel dogs, and all missionaries.

- Ibid

American women, having been conditioned out of their sex instincts, compensate by compulsive interest in rituals over the dead husk of sex ... and each one is sure she knows 'intuitively' the right ritual for conjuring the corpse. She knows and nobody can tell her any different ... especially a man unlucky enough to be in bed with her. So don't try. You will either make her furious or crush her spirit. You'll be attacking the most Sacred of Cows: the myth that women know all about sex, just from being women.

- Ibid

The typical American female is sure that she has genius as a courtesane, as an interior decorator, as a gourmet cook, and, always as a courtesane. Usually she is wrong on four counts. But don't try to tell her so. ... The American male is convinced that he is a great warrior, a great statesman, and a great lover. Spot checks prove that he is as deluded as she is. Or worse. Historo-culturally speaking, there is strong evidence that the American male, rather than the female, murdered sex in your country.

- Ibid

Frank HERBERT

Worship is a product of fear. - THE EYES OF HEISENBERG

• L. Ron HUBBARD

You could not understand the story of a man trapped into a world quite foreign to him, playing a role which he does not understand, distrusting the reality of all things on earth and above, seeing no reason and having his own outraged, believing that all will fade too soon, and grasping the fleeting instants of joy which, like gentle clouds hiding a scorching sun, too often and too swiftly blow away.

- TYPEWRITER IN THE SKY

No one ever asked to be born, few ever ask for the parts they have to play. And all men, in all their actions, think they are doing exactly right.

- Ibid

It was such a dull world, so drab; why not enliven it a little and stick pins into people's imagination?

- FEAR

Hats are hats and cats are cats, and when the birds sing there is something awry in the world. Bats are bats and hats are hats, and when it is spring the world is only bracing itself for another death. Rats are rats and hats are hats, and if you can't walk faster then you'll never be a master. You have a kind face, James Lowry.

- Ibid

He woke up to the realization that something horrible was about to happen to him, but, lying for a while in stupor, pushing back the frontiers of his consciousness, he picked up memory after memory, inspected it and cast it aside.

- Ibid

The great dark cloud spread and spread and the lamps became dim and the shadows deepened and began to march jerkily beside him at a distance. Each shadow, stationary until he came to it, coming up and marching with the rest. Darker and darker and then no sounds at all. No sounds or smells. Just the thin wisp of a mocking smile, gradually fading, forever receding.

- Ibid

Raymond F. JONES

Would it ever end — men's unthinking grasping for leadership, their mindless search for kings and gods, while within them their own powers withered? Always it had been the same; leaders arose holding before men the illusion of vast, glorious promises while they carefully led them into hells of lost dreams and broken promises.

- THE ALIEN

Morton KLASS

But humanity, unable to accomplish in the Dome what a free and numerous mankind had not been able to do even on its own planet, turned away from these legends. Unable to free itself from a horrible existence, mankind did not destroy itself in its own hopelessness — it refused to accept the reality of the horror outside the Dome! Man adapted to a meaningless world and the certainty of early death, by making that death meaningful, and the world somehow attractive! I wonder if humanity has always had that capacity ...

- THE ADAPTABLE ONE

Damon KNIGHT

Worse still — and this is the central falt of the book (ONE by David Karp) — the real enemy, the State, cannot be judged, cannot be compared, and cannot frighten because it does not exist: it not only has no name, but no history, no philosophy, no doctrine, no slogans, no catchphrases; it displaces no air and leaves no footprints.

- IN SEARCH OF WONDER

To Bradbury, as to most people, radar and rocket ships and atomic power are big, frightening, meaningless names: a fact which, no doubt, has something to do with his popular success, but which does not touch the root of the matter. Bradbury's strength lies in the fact that he writes about the things that are really important to us — not the things we pretend we are interested in — science, marriage, sports, politics, crime — but the fundamental prera-tional fears and longings and desires: the rage at being born; the will to be loved; the longing to communicate; the hatred of parents and siblings, the fear of things that are not self ...

- IN SEARCH OF WONDER

It's fun to be scared, when you know you can get off at the end of the line.

- Ibid

Beginning with Wells' War of the Worlds, the monsters who have landed on Earth in science fiction stories have frequently had this boneless, pickled-specimen character. I think it is safe to postulate that "an alien lands in a spaceship" is dream-talk for "a baby is born", and that the passengers of such ships are bound to be foetal.

- Ibid

C. M. KORNBLUTH

You should of been in the Old Army, man. We didn't go in for this Liberty Unlimited crock in the Old Army. If you wanted to march in step with somebody else you marched in step with somebody else man. None of this crock about you march out of step or twenty lashes from the sergeant for limiting your liberty.

- THE REMORSEFUL

Henry KUTTNER

Insanity doesn't necessarily mean dull perceptions. Often I was able to regard this life from a detached, critical viewpoint, because I am not part of it. I could see, in a way, a sort of pattern to the chaos of world events. Humanity striving toward some unknown goal, but not perhaps a wholly unguided striving. I could see that something was to come. Something new and different. Perhaps something better.

- DE PROFUNDIS

The better mind generally wins at chess, because it can foresee the possible gambits.

- CAMOUFLAGE

The higher the I.Q., the less need there is for self-justification, direct or indirect.

- Ibid

Since hairy men crouched in caves there has been fear of the dark. The fanged carnivores roaring outside in the night have not always been beasts. Psychology has changed them; the distorted, terrible sounds spawned in a place of peril — the lonely, menacing night beyond the firelight's circle — have created trolls and werewolves, vampires and giants and women with hollow backs.

- GHOST

What is life but a dime novel?

- SHOCK

Just inside the door was a hideous iron dog, originally intended for Victorian lawns, or perhaps for Hell.

- TIME LOCKER

The myth of the external soul is common to all Earth races, but the reason for it lies deep in the lore of the Dark World. This much I can say — there must be a balance in all things. For every negative, a positive. We of the Coven could not build up our power without creating a corresponding weakness somewhere, somehow, and we must hide that weakness so cunningly that no enemy could find it.

- THE DARK WORLD

"For two decades my mind has dwelt in shadow," he went on. "Beyond good and evil, beyond life and the figures that move like puppets on the stream of life."

- Ibid

It was like the face of a god, or of one who had looked upon too many gods.

- Ibid

Keith LAUMER

I was beginning to realize that Thomas was not really simple; he was merely uncomplicated.

- GREYLORN

Murray LEINSTER

There was silence, or as much silence as the jungle ever holds.

- DOOMSDAY DEFERRED

Milton LESSER

The whiteness of the girl was of new alabaster, of the flawless white that a pearl tries to capture but cannot. Even the hair, flowing in a cascade of tresses almost to her waist, was a sparkling silver, an incredible billowing of molten mica.

- GORDAK'S CARGO

H. P. LOVECRAFT (1890 - 1937)

Searchers after horror haunt strange, far places. For them are the catacombs of Ptolemais, and the carven mausolea of the nightmare countries. They climb to the moonlit towers of ruined Rhine castles, and falter down black cobwebbed steps beneath the scattered stones of forgotten cities in Asia. The haunted wood and the desolate mountain are their shrines, and they linger around the sinister monoliths of uninhabited islands. But the true epicure in the terrible, to whom a new thrill of unutterable ghastliness is the chief end and justification of existence, esteems most of all the ancient, lonely farmhouses of backwoods New England; for there the dark elements of strength, solitude, grotesqueness and ignorance combine to form the perfection of the hideous.

- THE PICTURE IN THE HOUSE

The most merciful thing in the world, I think, is the inability of the human mind to correlate all its contents. We live on a placid island of ignorance in the midst of black seas of infinity, and it was not meant that we should voyage far.

- THE CALL OF CTHULHU

There are vocal qualities peculiar to men, and vocal qualities peculiar to beasts; and it is terrible to hear the one when the source should yield the other. - Ibid

I have looked upon all that the universe has to hold of horror, and even the skies of spring and the flowers of summer must ever afterward be poison to me.

- Ibid

Robert W. LOWNDES

People have endured numerous irrational and suicidal cultures because someone was able to say, "Aw, t'ell with it!" at just the right time.

- SCIENCE FICTION QUARTERLY
May 1964 -editorial introduction

John LYMINGTON

There is nothing more determinedly sad, stupid and utterly futile than a crowd of people.

- THE NIGHT SPIDERS

When people who don't know each other get all friendly very quickly it's because they're frightened.

- Ibid

Walter M. MILLER, Jr.

Through a Moses, or through a Hitler, or an ignorant but tyrannical grandfather, a cultural inheritance may be acquired between dusk and dawn, and many have been so acquired.

- A CANTICLE FOR LEIBOWITZ

In a dark sea of centuries wherein nothing seemed to flow, a lifetime was only a brief eddy, even for the man who lived it.

- Ibid

A doubt is not a denial.

- Ibid

When you tire of living, change itself seems evil, does it not? for then any change at all disturbs the deathlike peace of the life-weary.

- Ibid

What did the world weigh? It weighs, but is not weighed. Sometimes its scales are crooked. It weighs life and labor in the balance against silver and gold. That'll never balance. But fast and ruthless, it keeps on weighing. It spills a lot of live that way, and some times a little gold.

- Ibid

Men must fumble awhile with error to separate it from truth, I think — as long as they don't seize the error hungrily because it has a pleasanter taste.

- Ibid

Walter M. MILLER, Jr.

The closer men came to perfecting for themselves a paradise, the more impatient they seemed to become with it, and with themselves as well. They made a garden of pleasure, and became progressively more miserable with it as it grew in richness and power and beauty; for then, perhaps, it was easier for them to see that something was missing in the garden, some tree or shrub that would not grow. When the world was in darkness and wretchedness, it could believe in perfection and yearn for it. But when the world became bright with reason and riches, it began to sense the narrowness of the needle's eye, and that rankled for a world no longer willing to believe or yearn.

- A CANTICLE FOR LEIBOWITZ

Michael MOORCOCK

Violence, is a self-generating monster. The more you let it take control, the more it grows.

- FIRECLOWN

I decided that I was leading a shallow existence and thought I'd find a deeper one on Mars. Of course I was wrong. It was merely less comfortable.

- Ibid

Sir Thomas MORE

(1478 - 1535)

They have no lawyers among them, for they consider them as a sort of people whose profession it is to disguise matters.

- UTOPIA

Andre NORTON

Man must fight or he becomes a soft nothing — but let him fight to build instead of to destroy.

- STAR MAN'S SON

Arch OBOLER

You dream too much, my friend,
Inside that Wagnerian mind of yours,
See phantasms, trolls, and small assorted fiends
Where none exist!

- NIGHT OF THE AUK
(Act two:Scene one)

Arch OBOLER

I do not go to funerals.
Why go and come,
And go and come again
From the place where eventually
I will go
And never come ...?

- NIGHT OF THE AUK
(Act two:Scene one)

There are those whose nerve sheaths speak another language,
Sing when others weep....

- Ibid
(Act two:Scene two)

In a universe as large as ours,
There will be sweeter springs
At which to rest. . . .

- Ibid
(Act two:Scene two)

Something in me always quarrels with sleep.
The darkness is a slut!

- Ibid
(Act two:Scene two)

Doctor, did you ever ride along the city streets at night,
And pass the houses,
At night the houses,
The row on row of lighted windows,
And think about the people living there?
I used to do that.
All those people,
And wondered of their laughing, and their loving,
All their arguments, and what they're eating, worrying, saying. . . .
All those lighted windows,
All those people,
I'll never know. . . .

- Ibid
(Act three:Scene two)

The Earth will be the home of lizards once again,
Or small mice,
Or wondrous insects,
Iridescent wings
Rising in great clouds,
Seeking only the warming sun,
At war only with the contrary winds. . . .

- Ibid
(Act three:Scene three)

Edgar PANGBORN

It is possible for a being, human or Martian, to see something beautiful, recognize it as beautiful, and immediately desire to destroy it. I know it's so, but I don't, I never shall, understand it. One would think that the mere shortness of life would be a reminder that to destroy beauty is to destroy one's own self, too.

- A MIRROR FOR OBSERVERS

Schools have come to regard education as a sort of by-product, something it would be nice to have if it isn't too much trouble.

- Ibid

Make-believe is real, the inside of your head is real, Things outside are a different kind of real, that's all.

- Ibid

I notice men themselves have never invented a god capable of understanding them.

- Ibid

I see twentieth-century man as a rather nice fellow with weak legs, and a head in bad condition from banging against a stone wall. Perhaps fairly soon he will cut that out, get sense, and go about his human business, relying on the godlike in himself and in his brother.

- Ibid

The worst cruelty would be to protect her from the pain of struggling.

- Ibid

I don't understand either the strength or the fragility of human beings, as I see them sometimes bending viably before enormous pressures, sometimes snapping at a touch.

- Ibid

I recognize nothing as evil unless cruelty is its dominant element.

- Ibid

To satisfy semantic order, one must distinguish between mindless cruelty and the malevolent sort. It's a humanly evil thing if a tiger chews a man, but the tiger is impersonal as lightning or avalanche, merely getting his dinner with no malevolence involved. A butcher killing a lamb is similarly impersonal, and I think he drives a rather decent bargain, though an articulate lamb might bleat reproach at me for saying so — the lambs juicy little carcass in return for a sheltered, well-fed life and a death more merciful than nature is at all likely to provide. If the term "cruelty" is allowed to include the non-malevolent causes of suffering I think the axiom will stand. I notice that a massive amount of human cruelty is non-malevolent, a result of ignorance or inertia or simply bad judgment and misinterpretation of fact.

- Ibid

Edgar PANGBORN

I have had much happiness, and expect more. I never won it by seeking it. Long ago, when I loved and married Maja, I thought that I was engaged in the pursuit of happiness. Neither she nor I ever found it until we stopped searching; until we learned that love is no more to be possessed than sunshine and that the sun shines when it will.

- A MIRROR FOR OBSERVERS

I think, with all respect to one of the most vital human documents, that the pursuit of happiness is an occupation of fools.

- Ibid

Do you think Christ could live any longer in the twentieth century than he did two thousand years ago? Galileo recants again. Socrates drinks the hemlock again, every day of every year — but now there are three billion units in the swarm, in a smaller world, and they have learned simpler methods of crucifixion, without embarrassing publicity.

- Ibid

You've spent your life hunting for counterfeit money in a pile of treasure. You looked for evil all your life, to prove your case — naturally you found it, and where it was absent you created it. Any fool can do that. I've looked for good in human nature and elsewhere, and found it, heaped up and flowing over. Anyone can do that, too, though good may be a little harder to see, because it's all around you, no farther away than the nearest leaf, the nearest smile, or pleasant word, no farther away than every breath of air.

- Ibid

Haven't you stopped to wonder why men want a scapegoat? What is it, what was it ever, but a device to help them avoid looking at themselves.

- Ibid

G. G. PENDARVES

Beauty! Passion! Exaltation! If a woman hasn't these she's a poor drab nuisance in the world.

- THE SIN EATER

What queer imitations of life a shadow could give!

- Ibid

Edgar Allan POE

The question is not yet settled, whether madness is or is not the loftiest intelligence — whether much that is glorious — whether all that is profound — does not spring from disease of thought — from moods of mind exalted at the expense of the general intellect.

- ELEONORA

Edgar Allan POE

Those who dream by day are cognizant of many things which escape those who dream only by night. - ELEONORA

Frederik POHL

— praise be to KLONO, brazen god of spacemen! —

- STAR SCIENCE FICTION STORIES No. 2

The chemistry of the human animal is such that it heals whatever thrusts it may receive from the outside world. Short of death, its only incapacitating wound comes from itself; from the outside it can survive astonishing blows, rise again, and flourish.

- A PLAGUE OF PYTHONS

Ayn RAND

Those who want slavery should have the grace to name it by its proper name. They must face the full meaning of that which they are advocating or condoning; the full, exact, specific meaning of collectivism, of its logical implications, of the principles upon which it is based, and of the ultimate consequences to which these principles will lead.

- ANTHEM

But we, Equality 7-2521, are glad to be living. If this is a vice, then we wish no virtue.

- Ibid

I wished to know the meaning of things. I am the meaning. I wished to find a warrant for being. I need no warrant for being, and no word of sanction upon my being. I am the warrant and the sanction.

- Ibid

It is my eyes which see, and the sight of my eyes grants beauty to the earth. It is my ears which hear, and the hearing of my ears gives its song to the world. It is my mind which thinks, and the judgment of my mind is the only searchlight that can find the truth. It is my will which chooses, and the choice of my will is the only edict I must respect.

- Ibid

I shall choose friends among men, but neither slaves nor masters. And I shall choose only such as please me, and them I shall love and respect, but neither command nor obey.

- Ibid

Frank M. ROBINSON

A man's magazine is a magazine with photographs of half-nude ladies in it. In our society, of course, the same definition does not hold for women's magazines.

- speech CHICON III

Eric Frank RUSSELL

Progress demands payment. Sooner or later the bill is presented.

- SENTINELS OF SPACE

Nothing is impossible. The word ought to be expunged from the dictionary.

- Ibid

He was around I.Q. 70 and steered mostly by his liver.

- Ibid

A great gate's strongest point is also its weakest — the lock.

- Ibid

No game goes wholly in one's favor all the time. ... It is the last move that counts.

- Ibid

Everyone talks sense according to his or her particular lights. Each man his own oracle.

- Ibid

Sadistic pleasures ask for adverse comment.

- Ibid

Timing is a factor important to success in anything and the clock is a greater autocrat than most folk realize. Attempting something difficult, one could be rebuffed when the clock's hands were in one position and scrape through when in another.

- Ibid

"There are men whose nature won't let a defeat go unavenged. There are men hard enough to sit in an antigrav and watch a loyal supporter dive to destruction. There are men who can become very frightened if properly stimulated. That is the great curse of this world — fear!" He stared hard at the other, pupils wide, irises shining. "Know what makes men sorely afraid?"

"Death," ventured Carson in sepulchral tones.

"Other men," Raven contradicted. "Remember that ..."

- Ibid

The autocratic type of mind insists that news of public interest must not be divulged in the public interest.

- Ibid

It was trash of a kind intended to occupy minds that otherwise might find time to think.

- Ibid

Robert SHECKLEY

It suddenly struck him that in all the time of mankind, nothing had changed. Perhaps the cave was a little bigger, the flints a little better, but man himself was no bigger, no tougher, no better fit.

- EARTH, AIR, FIRE AND WATER

Wilmar H. SHIRAS

Chess players don't like fantasy, and nobody else likes chess. You have to have a very special kind of mind to like both.

- IN HIDING

Clifford D. SIMAK

Alternate futures were a fantasy that employed semantics twisting to prove a point, a clever use of words that covered up and masked the fallacies.

- TIME AND AGAIN

... history was something that you couldn't trust. It was put together wrong, or copied wrong, or misinterpreted, or improved upon by a man with a misplaced imagination. Truth was so hard to keep, myth and fable so easy to breathe into a life that was more logical and more acceptable than truth.

- Ibid

After dark the land is different from what it is in daylight. It smells differently. Sweet and fresh and clean, as if it were just washed. You hear things in the quietness you do not hear in daylight. You walk and you are alone with the land and the land belongs to you.

- Ibid

Francis STEVENS

When the marvelous oversteps the bounds of known possibility there are three ways of meeting it. Trenmore and his sister ... faced every wonder as a fact by itself, to be accepted as such and let go at that. Drayton ... compromised on the second way, and accepted with a mental reservation, as "I see you now, but I am not at all sure that you are there or that I really believe in you!" Fortunately there was not one of the three so lacking in mental elasticity as to discover the third way, which is madness.

- THE HEADS OF CERBERUS

Bram STOKER

The strength of the vampire is that no one will believe in him.

- DRACULA

Theodore STURGEON

Women in love are funny that way. You can tell them anything about yourself, and as long as it's a buildup they'll believe it.

- THE ULTIMATE EGOIST

You're the Creator's transition between a hypothesis and a theory.

- Ibid

I didn't know what it was I was afraid of, and I had to make up something to fear. If I didn't do that I would go crazy . . .

- Ibid

I felt as if I were inside a great dusty brain that had just closed its eyes.

- SHOTTLE BOP

... all the screen showed was a lot of nothing on a background of the same ...

- ARTNAN PROCESS

Satan Strong, Scourge of the Spaceways, Supporter of the Serialized Short Story, and Specialist in Science on the Spot.

- TWO PERCENT INSPIRATION

"Watch them," said Robin, his quick eyes taking inventory of the people who jostled each other out of the train. "Not one in fifty is seeing anything. No one knows how far apart these pillars are, or the way all these rivets are set, or the cracks in the concrete under their feet. They're all looking at things separated from them in space and time — offices they've left, the homes they're going to, the people they will see. Hardly any of them are consciously here, now. They're all ghosts and we're a couple of Peeping Toms."

- MATURITY

No one can escape the basic urgencies of life — hunger, self-preservation, and so on. The difference between a childish and mature approach to the basic of hunger is that the child is preoccupied only with an immediate hunger. The adult directs most of his activities to overcoming tomorrow's hunger.

- Ibid

... the compulsions of the subconscious are not civilized.

- Ibid

You are going to find out that one of the prices you must pay for the privilege of becoming an adult is the control of the noises your mouth makes.

- Ibid

Theodore STURGEON

It has occurred to me that whatever creativeness I have is largely compounded of the very immaturity you are trying to get rid of.

- MATURITY

... man is the only animal which stays kittenish all its life. Maturity to a bull gorilla or a full-grown lion is a very serious thing. The basics become very close — procreation, self-preservation, the hunt. There isn't time for the playful amusements which preoccupy most of humanity.

- MATURITY

What modern psychiatry strives to do is to mature its patients, not in ontogenetic terms, not on an individualized psychosomatic basis, but purely and necessarily in terms of society, which is in itself illogical, unfunctional, and immature.

- Ibid

Society as a whole gets away with things which are prohibited in any well-run kindergarten, in the violence, greed, injustice, and stupidity departments. ... We can be excused of any crime if we do it on a large enough scale.

- Ibid

The psychos are doing a noble job, considering what they're up against. The fact remains that their chief occupation is in fitting individuals to a smooth survival in a monstrous environment.

- Ibid

He had never graduated from any college or university because he found them too slow for him, and too rigid in their approach to education.

- Ibid

You don't know what you think until you tell someone else about it.

- THE DREAMING JEWELS

He lived with books that led to books, art that led him to conjecture, music that led him to worlds beyond worlds of experience.

- Ibid

It's as if you were in love and you were thinking of nothing but the one you love, and you made a song. Maybe the song wouldn't be about your lover at all. Maybe it'd be about a brook, or a flower, or something. The wind. Maybe it wouldn't be a whole song, even. That song would be a by-product.

- Ibid

Theodore STURGEON

You can learn more music theory in a year on a guitar than you can in three on a piano, and music is one of the most human of human things.

- THE DREAMING JEWELS

Humanity is a concept close to the abnormals, who are wistfully near it, who state their membership with aberrated breath, who never cease to stretch their stunted arms toward it.

- Ibid

Then he gave himself up to pain, for his mind, inside, was like a field after a wind-driven brush fire, raw and burnt and smoking, speckled with hot and dying flames. Blackness crept over it slowly, with here and there a stubborn luminous pain.

- Ibid

Must there be a painting for every sketch? Do you have to compose a symphony for every theme?

- Ibid

No one noticed Barbara, no one lived with her, no one cared. And Barbara's life was very full, for she was born to receive. Others are born wishing to receive, so they wear bright masks and make attractive sounds like cicadas and operettas, so others will be forced, one way or another, to give to them.

- THE SILKEN-SWIFT

Loving is a most receiving thing, as anyone can attest who has been loved without returning it. It is the one who is loved who must give and give.

- Ibid

There was such a rush about me: wind, and tangled spray, and colors upon colors and shades of colors that were not colors at all but shifts of white and silver. If light like that were sound, it would sound like the sea on sand, and if my ears were eyes, they would see such a light.

- A SAUCER OF LONELINESS

The sea was on my lips with the taste of tears and the whole white night shouted and wept aloud.

- Ibid

For a moment she felt separated from the life she lived, in which there was no fragrance, no silence, in which nothing ever quite fit nor was quite filled.

- Ibid

Theodore STURGEON

Around her was a globe of silent astonishment, and outside it she was aware of the life-noise of the city, the hard-breathing giant who never inhales.

- A SAUCER OF LONELINESS

There is in certain living souls
A quality of loneliness unspeakable,
So great it must be shared
As company is shared by lesser beings.
Such loneliness is mine; so know by this
That in immensity
There is one lonelier than you.

- Ibid

Now, if terrestrial culture were a pyramid, at the apex (where the power is) would sit a blind man, for so constituted are we that only by blinding ourselves, bit by bit, may we rise above our fellows. The man at the apex has an immense preoccupation with the welfare of the whole, because he regards it as the source and structure of his elevation, which it is, and as an extension of himself, which it is not.

- THE WORLD WELL LOST

Terra. There is nothing like the conservatism of license. Given a culture of sybaritics, with an endless choice of mechanical titillations, and you have a people of unbreakable and hidebound formality, a people with few but massive taboos, a shockable, narrow, prissy people obeying the rules — even the rules of their calculated depravities — and protecting their treasured, specialized pruderies. In such a group there are words one may not use for fear of their fanged laughter, colors one may not wear, gestures and intonations one must forego, on pain of being torn to pieces. The rules are complex and absolute, and in such a place one's heart may not sing lest, through its warm free joyousness, it betrays one.

- Ibid

A cat is the only animal which can live like a parasite and maintain to the utmost its ability to take care of itself. You've heard of little lost dogs, but you never heard of a lost cat. Cats don't get lost, because cats don't belong anywhere.

- FLUFFY

Any sound is soothing if it is repeated often enough.

- Ibid

That is the prettiest piece of emotional claptrap that these old ears have ever heard. A triumph in studied spontaneity. A symphony in cynicism. A poem in perception.

- Ibid

Theodore STURGEON

She had a face like the cover of a book that no one has ever wanted to read.

- FLUFFY

The scream came. It came from downstairs, or outside, or perhaps from nowhere or everywhere, or from a place without a name. It was all around them, inside, behind them in time as well as space. It was the echo of their own first cry when they lost the first warmth and found loneliness, early, as everyone must. It was hurt: some the pain of impact, some of fever and delirium, and some the great pressure of beauty too beautiful to bear. And like pain, it could not be remembered. It lasted as long as it was a sound, and perhaps a little longer, and the frozen time after it died was immeasurable.

- THE SEX OPPOSITE

He thought, in your most secret dreams you cut a niche in yourself, and it is finished early, and then you wait for someone to come along to fill it — but to fill it exactly, every cut, curve, hollow and plane of it. And people do come along, and one covers up the niche, and another rattles around inside it, and another is so surrounded by fog that for the longest time you don't know if she fits or not; but each of them hits you with a tremendous impact. And then one comes along and slips in so quietly that you don't know when it happened, and fits so well you almost can't feel anything at all. And that is it.

- Ibid

Knowledge and understanding aren't props for one another. Knowledge is a pile of bricks, and understanding is a way of building. Build for me!

- Ibid

I'd lived long enough to know you can't break clean from any close contact with a human being. Quit a job, get a divorce, leave a home town, it drags on in shreds and tatters that haunt you.

- DIE, MAESTRO, DIE!

I sat watching the wallpaper and laboriously un-listening those clinical grunts and the gay-weary responses in the other room. The wallpaper was awful. I remember a night-club act where Reginald Gardiner used to give sound-effect renditions of wallpaper designs. This one, I decided, would run "Body to weep .. yawp, yawp; body to weep .. yawp, yawp," very faintly, with the final syllable a straining retch. I had just reached a particularly clumsy join where the paper utterly demolished its own rhythm and went "Yawp yawp body to weep" when the outer door opened and I leaped to my feet with the rush of utter guilt one feels when caught in an unlikely place with no curt and lucid explanation.

- A WAY OF THINKING

Theodore STURGEON

I heard the snoring of the city and for an awesome second felt it would roll over, open its eyes and . . . speak.

- A WAY OF THINKING

The idiot lived in a black and gray world, punctuated by the white lightning of hunger and the flickering of fear. His clothes were old and many-windowed. Here peeped a shinbone, sharp as a cold chisel, and there in the torn coat were ribs like the fingers of a fish. He was tall and flat. His eyes were calm and his face was dead.

- MORE THAN HUMAN

He slept like an animal, well and lightly, faced in the opposite direction from that of a man; for a man going to sleep is about to escape into it while animals are prepared to escape out of it. He had an animal's maturity, in which the play of kittens and puppies no longer has a function. He was without humor and without joy. His spectrum lay between terror and contentment.

- Ibid

It was spring, the part of spring where the bursting is done, the held-in pressures of desiccated sap-veins and gum-sealed buds are gone, and all the world's in a rush to be beautiful. The air was heavy and sweet; it lay upon lips until they parted, pressed them until they smiled, entered boldly to beat in the throat like a second heart. It was air with a puzzle to it, for it was still and full of the colors of dreams, all motionless; yet it had a hurry to it. The stillness and the hurry were alive and laced together, and how could that be? That was the puzzle.

- Ibid

A man clings to certainties, especially when he has only one.

- Ibid

Death-cries in the wood. Lonely hunter and its solitary prey. The sap falls and the bear sleeps and the birds fly south, all doing it together, not because they are all members of the same thing, but only because they are all solitary things hurt by the same thing.

- Ibid

I think people only cry when there's a chance of getting help from somewhere.

- Ibid

Logic and truth are two very different things, but they often look the same to the mind that's performing the logic.

- Ibid

Theodore STURGEON

Outside an oriole made a long slender note, broke it, and let the fragments fall through the shining air.

- MORE THAN HUMAN

Lovemaking, even the suppressed and silent kind, is a demanding thing, a thirsty and yearning thing. - Ibid

Reality isn't the most pleasant of atmospheres, Lieutenant. But we like to think we're engineered for it. It's a pretty fine piece of engineering, the kind an engineer can respect. Drag in an obsession and reality can't tolerate it. Something has to give; if reality goes, your fine piece of engineering is left with nothing to operate on. Nothing it was designed to operate on. So it operates badly. So kick the obsession out; start functioning the way you wer designed to function.

- Ibid

Fear in its way is a comfort for it means that somewhere hope is alive.

- Ibid

And while he was waiting he took his thought, all of it, and placed it like a patterned drape across the entrance of his mind. He hung it fairly, attended to its folds and saw with meticulous care that it reached quite to the bottom, quite to the top and that there were no gaps at the sides.

- Ibid

He felt a rising, choking sense of worship, and recognized it for what it has always been for mankind — self-respect.

- Ibid

Pity, he thought, is a sharing sort of thing — you can feel the helplessness of the unarmed — whereas rage, like passion, stands apart from its object and is a lonesome thing.

- HURRICANE TRIO

If a man has the virtue or the curse of empathy, he has to be kind. He must, for the most selfish of reasons: any time he kicks out at another human, he will find the bruises on his own shins.

- Ibid

When love is too humble it can kill the lovers. . . .

- THE CLINIC

Theodore STURGEON

He was a piece of nerve tissue becoming aware of the proximity of a ganglion, and dimly conscious of the existence, somewhere, of a brain. His resentment stemmed from a nagging sense of loss. In ignorance he had possessed a kind of freedom — he'd have called it loneliness while he had it — which in retrospect filled him with nostalgia. He carried his inescapable sense of belonging like a bundle of thorns, light but most irritating. It was with him in drunkenness and the fights, the movies and the statistical shoutings of the baseball season. He never slept, but was among those who slept. He could not laugh without the realization that he was among the laughers. He no longer moved in a static universe, or rested while the world went by, for his every action had too obvious a reaction. Unbidden, his mind made analogies to remind him of this invert-unwanted duality.

— "... AND MY FEAR IS GREAT ..."

Then it was over not because it was finished, like music, or a meal, but because it was perfect — like foam or a flower caught in the infrangible amber of memory. — Ibid

The only things worth believing were things you learned from people you trusted.

— TINY AND THE MONSTER

I write what I write to find a way home. "Home" in this sense is what one wants. It is what one wants to be. In one context it is love; in another, truth. It can twist itself about and simply be an other-place; a place any time away from here. A way home can be a long way or a very short way. Sometimes it is a long way of finding out what the short way is. Home is also what one believes, and those very other things, what one believed and what one is coming to believe now, for later. So I write long stories and short stories and angry stories and funny ones so that they can be homes for me, that I had, that I have, that I wish.

— A WAY HOME

It was well after bedtime and Bobby was asleep, dreaming of a place with black butterflies that stayed, and a dog with a wuffly nose and blunt, friendly rubber teeth. It was a dark place, and comfy with all the edges blurred and soft, and he could make them all jump if he wanted to.

— SHADOW, SHADOW ON THE WALL

Scare a man badly enough, and then make the thing he fears diffuse and unreachable, and he'll lash out indiscriminately at everything and everyone.

— TWINK

Theodore STURGEON

He liked to act always a little dumber, a little slower, and a little sicker than he was. In a world where everybody else acts smarter than they really are, the advantage was his.

- THE KING AND FOUR QUEENS

Clifford D. Simak's genius lies in the ability to write contemplative fiction and to bring the overwhelming horror or the overwhelming joy of people, watching a cataclysm or a great reward, approach like a shadow or a cloud.

- speech CHICON III

Thomas Burnett SWANN

The austere blue stone imparted a dignity and sadness which seemed to say: playful moments endure only in stone.

- DAY OF THE MINOTAUR

The death which comes at the end of a long life, in a warm bed surrounded by loving children, is a lying down and not a darkness; it is not to be feared. But a slow and agonizing death in the fullness of youth is dreadful to men and dreaded even by gods.

- Ibid

A man is strong, and strength makes him kind instead of tyrannical. A man is courageous, not because he lacks fear but because he conquers fear.

- Ibid

Darkness is a going instead of a coming; an absence of light rather than a presence of bat wings, mummy wrappings, ravens, or whatever other fanciful figure of speech we poets use to describe her. But a going can be as welcome as a coming, and daylight, hateful for what it showed, faded like a lamp which has burned its olive oil and left us to the kind secrecy of night.

- Ibid

William F. TEMPLE

They weren't happy, these people — they were poor. They were always wanting something — not only to have something but to go somewhere, see something new, have someone praise them, reassure them, do things for them. When they were little kids the world was too big for them and they tore around it in deadly fear of missing any of it before they died. And when they were big kids, with dulled eyes and desensitized palates, the world was too small. It was a pile of cinders which they prodded wearily, hoping against hope that one day they might uncover something that gleamed bright and new and fascinated the attention. Like the dimly-remembered silver ring hanging from hood of a baby carriage.

- THE WHISPERING GALLERY

William F. TEMPLE

All men are Doodles. Why argue?

- THE THREE SUNS OF AMARA

"Have you ever been to Na-Abiza?"

"Yes, I have, human, but I didn't get there."

"Why not?"

"Because it wasn't there when I got there."

"But you just said you didn't get there."

"Of course I didn't, human, if it wasn't there."

"Well, is it there now?"

"How can I tell? I'm here, not there."

- Ibid

The only test of one's actual existence is the response of another mind.

- Ibid

Art is selection.

- Ibid

This planet of yours, Rosala, gets a bit too bizare for me at times. I can't get a clear picture of the place. I keep trying to piece it together, but nothing joins onto anything. I'm beginning to think the pieces aren't meant to fit. They belong to different jigsaw puzzles."

- Ibid

I'm not afraid of death, but sometimes I'm afraid of dying.

- Ibid

Excess of anything tended toward boredom -- even, strangely enough, sense of novelty.

- Ibid

Inflexible things only get broken here.

- Ibid

J.R.R. TOLKIEN

Now it is a strange thing, but things that are good to have and days that are good to spend are soon told about and not much to listen to; while things that are uncomfortable palpitating, and even gruesome, may make a good tale, and take a deal of telling anyway.

- THE HOBBIT

There is nothing like looking, if you want to find something. ... You certainly usually find something, if you look, but it is not always quite the something you were after.

- Ibid

J.R.R. TOLKIEN

Escaping goblins to be caught by wolves!

- THE HOBBIT

It does not do to leave a live dragon out of your calculations, if you live near him.

- Ibid

Never laugh at live dragons.

- Ibid

Many that live deserve death. And some that die deserve life. Can you give it to them? Then do not be too eager to deal out death in judgement. For even the very wise cannot see all ends.

- THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING

They began to feel that all this country was unreal, and that they were stumbling through an ominous dream that led to no awakening.

- Ibid

Some things are ill to hear when the world's in shadow.

- Ibid

Goldberry sang many songs with them, songs that began merrily in the hills and fell softly down into silence; and in the silences they saw in their minds pools and waters wider than any they had known, and looking into them they saw the sky below them and the stars like jewels in the depths.

- Ibid

'I've got things to do,' he said: 'My making and my singing, my talking and my walking, and my watching of the country.'

- Ibid

Despair is only for those who see the end beyond all doubt. ... It is wisdom to recognize necessity, when all other courses have been weighed, though as folly it may appear to those who cling to false hope.

- Ibid

I feel as if I was inside a song.

- Ibid

It's the job that's never started as takes longest to finish.

- Ibid

J.R.R. TOLKIEN

I am not going to tell you my name, not yet at any rate. ... for one thing it would take a long while: my name is growing all the time, and I've lived a very long, long time; so my name is like a story. Real names tell you the story of the things they belong to in my language, in the Old Entish as you might say. It is a lovely language, but it takes a very long time to say anything in it, because we do not say anything in it, unless it is worth taking a long time to say, and to listen to.

- THE TWO TOWERS

... his face, as I remember it ... became like windows in a stone wall: windows with shutters inside.

- Ibid

Songs like trees bear fruit only in their own time and their own way: and sometimes they are withered untimely.

- Ibid

He had not needed hope, as long as despair could be postponed.

- Ibid

I am weary, and full of grief, and afraid. But I have a deed to do, or to attempt, before I too am slain.

- Ibid

Let me go where my doom takes me.

- Ibid

War must be, while we defend our lives against a destroyer who would devour all; but I do not love the bright sword for its sharpness, nor the arrow for its swiftness, nor the warrior for his glory. I love only that which they defend: the city of the Men of Numenor; and I would have her loved for her memory, her ancientry, her beauty, and her present wisdom. Not feared, save as men may fear the dignity of a man, old and wise.

- Ibid

The land dreams in a false peace, and for a while all evil is withdrawn.

- Ibid

He sat for a moment half dreaming, listening to the noise of water, the whisper of dark trees, the crack of stone, and the vast waiting silence that brooded behind all sound.

- THE RETURN OF THE KING

J.R.R. TOLKIEN

In the morning counsels are best, and night changes many thoughts.

- THE RETURN OF THE KING

It is the way of my people to use light words at such times and say less than they mean. We fear to say too much. It robs us of the right words when a jest is out of place.

- Ibid

It is best to love first what you are fitted to love.

- Ibid

It is not our part to master all the tides of the world, but to do what is in us for the succour of those years wherein we are set, uprooting the evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clean earth to till. What weather they shall have is not ours to rule.

- Ibid

All's well as ends better!

- Ibid

E.C. TUBB

Life is a lottery, my friend. We are born — in circumstances over which we have no control. Some inherit wealth, others poverty. Some have the gift of intelligence and the power to command. Others have nothing and die with what they were born. In the game of life not all can win.

- THE WINDS OF GATH

Wilson TUCKER

Sanity is a legal term, it doesn't properly belong to medical terminology.

- THE TIME MASTERS

Most of the ordinary things in the world are nice. Cling to them while you can.

- Ibid

Jack VANCE

Death is the heritage of life; a man's vitality is like air in a bladder. Punct this bubble and away, away, away flees life, like the color of a fading dream.

- THE DYING EARTH

Jack VANCE

Beauty is a luster which love bestows to guile the eye. Therefore it may be said that only when the brain is without love will the eye look and see no beauty.

- THE DYING EARTH

I am no one, nothing. I am an abstraction, an emotion, the ooze of terror, the sweat of horror, the shake in the air when a scream has departed.

- Ibid

Kurt VONNEGUT, Jr.

To Shepherd, life seemed to be laid out like a golf course, with a series of beginnings, hazards, and ends, and with a definite summing up — for comparison with others' scores — after each hole. He was variously grim or elated over triumphs or failures no one else seemed to notice, but always stoical about the laws that governed the game.

- PLAYER PIANO

I want to stay as close to the edge as I can without going over. Out on the edge you see all kinds of things you can't see from the center. Big, undreamed-of things — the people on the edge see them first.

- Ibid

He knew with all his heart that the human situation was a frightful botch, but it was such a logical, intelligently arrived-at botch that he couldn't see how history could possibly have led anywhere else.

- Ibid

"I'm doctor of cowshit, pigshit, and chickenshit," he said. "When you doctors figure out what you want, you'll find me out in the barn shoveling my thesis."

- Ibid

Nobody's so damn well educated that you can't learn ninety per cent of what he knows in six weeks. The other ten per cent is decoration.

- Ibid

Show me a specialist, and I'll show you a man who's so scared he's dug a hole for himself to hide in.

- Ibid

Men, by their nature, seemingly, cannot be happy unless engaged in enterprises that make them feel useful.

- Ibid

Kurt VONNEGUT, Jr.

I hold, and the members of the Ghost Shirt Society hold:

That there must be virtue in imperfection, for Man is imperfect, and Man is a creation of God.

That there must be virtue in frailty, for Man is frail, and Man is a creation of God.

That there must be virtue in inefficiency, for Man is inefficient, and Man is a creation of God.

That there must be virtue in brilliance followed by stupidity, for Man is alternately brilliant and stupid, and Man is a creation of God.

- PLAYER PIANO

What distinguishes man from the rest of the animals is his ability to do artificial things. To his greater glory, I say. And a step backward, after making a wrong turn, is a step in the right direction.

- Ibid

Things don't stay the way they are ... It's too entertaining to try to change them.

- Ibid

H. R. WAKEFIELD

The man of superior power — there are no such women — should seek to learn every lesson evil as well as good has to teach. So will he be able to extend and multiply his personality, but always he must remain absolute master of himself.

- "HE COMETH AND HE PASSETH BY!"

I do nothing purposelessly nor from what I consider a bad motive. To me 'bad' is synonymous with 'unnecessary'. I do nothing unnecessary.

- Ibid

Stanley G. WEINBAUM

Human adaptation is not only conformity to environment, but also the actual changing of environment to fit human needs! The first cave man who left his cave to build a grass hut changed his environment, and so, in exactly the same sense, did Steinmetz, Edison, and as far as that goes, Julius Caesar and Napoleon.

- THE ADAPTIVE ULTIMATE

"The lie as an adaptive mechanism ... deserves more attention than it has received. Probably the original liars are those plants and animals that use protective mimicry — harmless snakes imitating poisonous ones, stingless flies that look like bees. Those are living lies.

- Ibid

Stanley G. WEINBAUM

A gorilla has a far better brain than a turtle, hasn't it. And yet which is the more successful — the gorilla, which is rare and confined only to a small region of Africa, or the turtle, which is common everywhere from the arctic to the antarctic? And as for man — well, if you had microscopic eyes, and could see every living thing on the Earth, you'd decide that man was just a rare specimen, and that the planet was really a nematode world — that is, a worm world — because nematodes far outnumber all the other forms of life put together.

- THE LOTUS EATERS

H. G. WELLS

The past is but the beginning of a beginning, and all that is and has been is but the twilight of the dawn. ... a day will come when beings who are now latent in our thoughts and hidden in our loins shall stand upon this earth as one stands upon a footstool, and shall laugh and reach out their hands amid the stars.

- THE DISCOVERY OF THE FUTURE

Oscar WILDE

The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it.

- THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY

Children begin by loving their parents; as they grow older they judge them; sometimes they forgive them.

- Ibid

Jack WILLIAMSON

The planets were the seed of the sun. Strange life developed in them, through the ages, under solar radiation. The sun will die, now; its work is done. And the new creatures have gone forth, to feed themselves upon the star dust, to absorb diffuse radiation and the cosmic rays, to consume, perhaps, fragments of old suns, until they themselves are suns, spawning planets, and the cycle of their life is complete.

- BORN OF THE SUN

Richard WILSON

In the darkness, shadows become terrible things.

- LOVE

Wallace WOOD

Know then, that it is not the function of prophecy to delineate coming events. The existence of the prophecy is in itself a catalyst in the shaping of the future; specifically in causing men to take steps to implement or to thwart its realization. Therefore, no prophecy can literally come true, for as soon as it is uttered, it has altered the course of events.

- THE WORLD OF THE WIZARD KING

Austin Tappan WRIGHT

A girl becomes uncanny if stared at too intently. The attraction withers. It withers, but it returns subtly. It is not there, and then it is there.

- ISLANDIA

Beauty brought Dorna; and she was lost, and beauty died.

- Ibid

My brain would not fail me if I held my thoughts very still.

- Ibid

At night the tired mind loses its hold and love is a torrent of bitter waters closing over the head of the lover. The wind sighed in the trees and said "never," and "never" was the only reality ... The road was plain at night, the horse sure-footed, and a day was gained, and sleep did not have to be wooed in a bed into which one feared to go. The body was too tired for loving and could only hold to the thought of "never". "Never" was like the stars overhead, as infinite and as deep as the dark spaces between them.

- Ibid

Clear water hides nothing and seems the simplest thing and yet is a mystery, present to one sense and not to another, its invisibility cool and flowing. It cannot be grasped, but it quenches thirst, and all that its limpidness covers or touches is washed clean and changed and heightened in color. . . .

- Ibid

"The danger is," he continued, "that some woman of strong will and ideas will love you as material that she can mold into the image of what she believes and adores. Don't marry a molding woman, John! They are what some men want, but not a man like you any longer. There are many such women in your country who the moment they become interested seek to compel you to be a certain thing and to live a certain way. They hold up to you the picture of you they have painted and reproach you if you do not resemble it."

- Ibid

Austin Tappan WRIGHT

I never could get anything out of philosophical definitions. They are like bags open at both ends. So long as you don't touch them their contents remain inside, but when you lift the bags the contents run out.

- ISLANDIA

You should tell the truth to those who have a right to know it, that is if it affects what they will do. But you have no duty to tell the truth to those who intermeddle. - Ibid

I wished all loves to be permanent.

- Ibid

One who is too much in need is handicapped as a giver.

- Ibid

Philip WYLIE

All entity, including life, is found in states of tension between opposites. Progress — or evolution — is but motion amidst these states, toward order, toward integration, toward individuation. The individual mind reflects a certain sum of them and the more it is aware the greater the sum of opposites it comprehends.

- THE DISAPPEARANCE

These three — know-how, logic, and imagination — are all that distinguishes man from beasts. The first is the product of the other two; it is the ranging imagination that suggests new concepts and brings to awareness concepts hitherto buried in instinct; it is logic which sifts true imaginings from the merely fanciful and practical ideas from the merely bizarre, aimless, or wanton. The employment of the two thus furnishes humanity with its occasional increments of knowledge, or know-how.

- Ibid

Imagination without logic is worthless. It conceives uncritically, pursued for its own sake, it but deforms the mind. Logic by itself is only futile; without imagination it can only reprove the proven and so discover nothing.

- Ibid

... education distorts more even than it informs.

- Ibid:

Faith's the agreement to abandon detachment ... To supplant a packaged security for open integrity. To agree not to learn anything more. It is the acceptance of a channel, by a man who was previously able to move on the whole terrain.

- Ibid

Philip WYLIE

Strides in new knowledge are taken slowly, usually against the will of the currently knowledgeable; and "education" is designed far more to freeze learning than to advance it. For education caters to the cultural pattern, and promulgates it. Education slams the door of every tabooed vista in the face of all youthful interest. It meticulously blunts imagination and stultifies criticism. It but conveys a culture; in that task, the errors of the culture and its unchallenged prohibitions are handed down. It discourages the rebel and the innovator; it sedulously abets the conformer.

- THE DISAPPEARANCE

Is the definition of man this: he is an everlasting liar to himself about himself?

- Ibid

Roger ZELAZNY

The universe did not invent justice. Man did. Unfortunately, man must reside in the universe.

- THE DREAM MASTER

Marriage is like alchemy. It served an important purpose once, but I hardly feel it's here to stay.

- Ibid

I gave her a clinic referral card that said, 'Diagnosis: Bitch. Prescription: Drug therapy and a tight gag.'

- Ibid

"Everything that's miserable in the world," Nick the dwarf once said to me, "is because of beauty."

- ISLE OF THE DEAD

Of all the things a man may do, sleep probably contributes most to keeping him sane. It puts brackets about each day. If you do something foolish or painful today, you get irritated if somebody mentions it, today. If it happened yesterday, though, you can nod or chuckle, as the case may be. You've crossed through nothingness or dream to another island in Time.

- Ibid

When a fairy tale blows up and the dream dust settles and you find yourself standing there, knowing that the last line will never be written, why not omit any exercises in futility? There had been giants and dwarves, toads and mushrooms, caves full of jewels and not one, but ten wizards. . . .

- ISLE OF THE DEAD