



## THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY (illustrated, complete, and unabridged 1891 edition)

By OSCAR WILDE

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“Be careful what you wish for. Dorian Gray is an irresistibly handsome (and utterly selfish) socialite concerned with superficialities of the ego: appearance, beauty, passion, youth and image. Upon getting his portrait painted by a friend, Gray expresses his desire that he remain as young and handsome as he is in the picture, while the portrait instead be the one to age.” Laurel

“The exquisitely handsome Gray prays for eternal good looks as his portrait is being painted. Thus his picture ages and withers while he remains an Adonis “made out of ivory and rose leaves” despite the corrupt and dissolute life that he starts to lead.” Robert McKie, The Guardian

“The Picture of Dorian Gray is a haunting, Gothic novel that combines beautiful writing with a deceptively simple plot. It’s a thoughtful and thoroughly enjoyable cautionary tale.” Pretty Books

“The furor was unsurprising: no work of mainstream English-language fiction had come so close to spelling out homosexual desire. The opening pages leave little doubt that Basil Hallward, the painter of Dorian’s portrait, is in love with his subject. . . . Wilde went to prison not because he loved young men but because he flaunted that love, and “Dorian Gray” became the chief exhibit of his shamelessness. “ Alex Ross, The New Yorker

THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY is Oscar Wilde's masterpiece and his only published novel. It was extremely controversial when it was first published and now here is your chance to read this important work in the expanded 1891 edition, specially formatted for Kindle. This edition includes Wilde's famous preface on the role of the artist.

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## WILDE Bibliography

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## **Editorial Review**

### Amazon.com Review

A lush, cautionary tale of a life of vileness and deception or a loving portrait of the aesthetic impulse run rampant? Why not both? After Basil Hallward paints a beautiful, young man's portrait, his subject's frivolous wish that the picture change and he remain the same comes true. Dorian Gray's picture grows aged and corrupt while he continues to appear fresh and innocent. After he kills a young woman, "as surely as if I had cut her little throat with a knife," Dorian Gray is surprised to find no difference in his vision or surroundings. "The roses are not less lovely for all that. The birds sing just as happily in my garden."

As Hallward tries to make sense of his creation, his epigram-happy friend Lord Henry Wotton encourages Dorian in his sensual quest with any number of Wildean paradoxes, including the delightful "When we are happy we are always good, but when we are good we are not always happy." But despite its many languorous pleasures, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is an imperfect work. Compared to the two (voyeuristic) older men, Dorian is a bore, and his search for ever new sensations far less fun than the novel's drawing-room discussions. Even more oddly, the moral message of the novel contradicts many of Wilde's supposed aims, not least "no artist has ethical sympathies. An ethical sympathy in an artist is an unpardonable mannerism of style." Nonetheless, the glamour boy gets his just deserts. And Wilde, defending Dorian Gray, had it both ways: "All excess, as well as all renunciation, brings its own punishment."

### From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. First published in 1890 in Lippincott's Monthly Magazine and the following year in novel form, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* categorically changed Victorian Britain and the landscape of literature. An ostentatious, self-confessed aesthete, known for his wit and intellect, Wilde not only had to endure his prose being labeled "poisonous" and "vulgar," but also suffer its use as evidence in the ensuing trial, resulting in his eventual imprisonment for crimes of "gross indecency." Frankel's introduction provides a deft preliminary analysis of the novel itself—exploring etymology and extensive editorial alterations (both accidental and deliberate)—and offers valuable insight into the socio-cultural juxtaposition of aristocratic Victorian society and the London underworld. The original typescript provides the unique opportunity to examine what was considered acceptable in both the US and UK at the time. Intriguing annotations allude to Wilde's influences and enterprising range of reference, incorporating art, poetry, literature, Greek mythology, philosophy, and fashion (certain to inspire further reading; an appendix is provided). Comparisons are drawn between *Dorian Gray* and Wilde's other literary output, as well as to the work of Walter Pater. Numerous illustrations subtly compliment Frankel's inferences. A fine contextualization of a major work of fiction profoundly interpreted, ultimately riveting. (Mar.)

### From School Library Journal

Grade 10 Up—"The Whole Story" format provides illustrations and annotations to the classic text. Ross's lively and sophisticated cartoons add interest, and historical information helps readers place the novel in proper context and gives insight into its characters. The problem with this attractive, glossy layout, however, is that the text and the quotes pulled from it are not always on the same page. Further, some illustrations and notations visually cut into the narrative and may distract readers. For example, a drawing appears on the first page along with the passage, "In the centre of the room, clamped to an upright easel, stood the full-length portrait of a young man of extraordinary personal beauty," but that quote does not appear until the second page of the story. Useful as a supplement to the original novel, but not a replacement for it.

*Karen Hoth, Marathon Middle/High School, FL*

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

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