

A portrait of the artist
as a young man
passage commentary



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A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man Commentary Passage: Page 248: "- You made me confess the fears that I have..." - Page 249: " Cranly did not answer." In this passage, Stephen is saying how Cranly has made him confess all of his fears to him, but then he tells Cranly what he does not fear. Stephen tells Cranly that he does not " fear to be alone or to be spurned for another or to leave whatever" he has to leave. Stephen has gone through several stages in his life, and now that he has gone through all of those stages, he feels that he needs to go further into himself to try to discover his real self. Stephen also mentions to Cranly that he is " not afraid to make a mistake, even a big mistake, a lifelong mistake and perhaps as long as eternity too." This shows that Stephen feels that making mistakes is fine because in the end, he will learn from his mistakes. Meanwhile, Cranly repeats the word " alone" twice to try to enforce the word to Stephen and make sure that the word stands out to him. He is trying to make sure that he understands what Stephen is really saying. Cranly also points out that the word " alone" means " not only to be separate from all others but to have not even one friend." By saying this, Cranly is trying to point out to Stephen that if he leaves everything, he will also be leaving Cranly, who is Stephen's best friend. Stephen replies without hesitation that he " will take the risk." This shows how determined Stephen is to pursue art as a career. Cranly goes on, while ignoring Stephen's last sentence, talking about how if a person is truly alone, he or she would not " have any one person...who would be more than a friend, more even than the noblest and truest friend a man ever had." At this point, it is unclear about whether Cranly is addressing Stephen or talking to himself. Cranly remains quiet afterwards pondering that thought while Stephen looks at Cranly's face for any reaction. Stephen then realizes that <https://assignbuster.com/a-portrait-of-the-artist-as-a-young-man-passage-commentary/>

Cranly had been speaking of himself, and of " his own loneliness which he feared." After some time, Stephen finally asks who Cranly is speaking of, but Cranly remains silent and does not answer. In this passage, it becomes very clear that Stephen and Cranly are two very different people despite the fact that they are best friends. They both care about each other about the same, but one wants to leave and one fears loneliness. Stephen and Cranly are both growing up, and both are discovering new things about themselves although Stephen seems to know where he wants to go while Cranly is still afraid to be alone. Cranly does not really understand why Stephen feels the need to be alone because Cranly thinks that extreme solitude would be too lonely for him. This one difference is what separates the two men. Stephen is a true artist, who feels that he has been called to greatness through art, and so has to make immense sacrifices in order to accomplish great things. Cranly, on the other hand, is not an artist like Stephen, and so does not feel the need to pursue the same things as Stephen. Instead, he is just confused by Stephen's words and plans, and does not see why anyone would want to be alone. This passage is very touching partly because of the word choice. Joyce used words such as " fear," " lifelong," " eternity," " grave," and " sadness" to show how permanent and even devastating some effects could be because of choices made in life. In this passage, Joyce shows how different Stephen and Cranly are from each other, while at the same time, he is also showing how loving they are towards each other. Men usually do not express their feelings, and these two express themselves indirectly, but in a way that one can see how much they really care for one another. Book Title: A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man Author: James Joyce Level: IB Senior

English

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