

# The picture of dorian gray, by oscar wilde



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Setting (Jasmine) The Decadent Movement was an artistic and literary movement occurring in Western Europe that portrayed an aesthetic style of satire, critique, and artificiality. The novel was both written and set in London, England some time in the 1890's. Dorian travels freely between two major parts in London; the wealthy West end, and the run-down East end. These two sides of London represent the two sides of Dorian Gray. On the west side, Dorian is a gentleman, the local celebrity. On the East side, however, Dorian is villainous and suspicious. He becomes "" that guy"" that your parents told you to stay away from. As the plot progresses, we see Wilde's intention of merging two locations with Dorian's two distinct personalities. The Decadent Movement took place during the Victorian Era, where the line drawn between high and low class was a segregation; a war between incomes, making the plot of Wilde's story that much more intriguing when published in 1980.

Synopsis (Belinda) In The Picture of Dorian Gray, the very handsome protagonist Dorian Gray was just a naive and innocent boy until a charismatic nobleman named Henry Wotton comes along and influences him. Basil Hallward, a painter who idolizes Dorian greatly, paints a perfect portrait of Dorian and gives it to him. Because of Henry's words about beauty, Dorian trades his soul for the eternal beauty of this portrait. From there, the beautiful Dorian becomes more sinful and hedonistic, and with every sin he commits, his portrait changes while he remains beautiful. At first, he was glad that he could do anything he wanted and still look beautiful but near the end, the painting drove him to the edge. He tried to change his ways but it was too late.

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So the main character in the novel is Dorian. Dorian Gray is a handsome and wealthy young man who serves as a muse to Basil Hallward. A dynamic character because he turns into a monster by the end of the book. He is the archetype of beauty, representing the main theme about soul corruption and beauty.

Next we have the devil, Lord Henry Wotton. He is the cynical one and always arguing very controversial ideas which is probably why the novel was censored during that time. Many professors believe he was the representation of the devil because he incited Dorian to commit sinful acts and then would go and have a cup of tea in the afternoon.

There is also, Basil Hallward with his puppy love. He is the artist and the one who paints Dorian's portrait. He is so in love with Dorian that he is afraid of portraying his love in his painting. He tries and fails to save Dorian from the influence of Lord Henry and it will end up costing him greatly.

Other important character is Sybil Vane. She is an actress from a poor theatre and Dorian falls in love with her young beauty and skills. After a terrible performance, Dorian decides that she is not worth his love anymore and breaks her heart. Sybil's suicide is the rolling ball to Dorian's decadence and the rise of his evil self.

Theme (Jennie) One of the main themes of the book is beauty. Dorian Gray embodies the idea of pure beauty. He is beautiful and he attains eternal youth. Dorian's physical representation becomes something that everyone in

the book aspires to be. Although he is beautiful in the exterior, his internal self is foul which goes with the saying, dont judge a book by its cover.

good vs evil: From the beginning, both evil and good were equals to each other. Basil Hallward, Dorians painter thats obsessed with him, symbolizes the angel in Dorians shoulder. He tries to influence Dorian with good habits like staying away from corruption. On the other hand, Lord Henry Wotton is the complete opposite of Basil. He is a hedonistic and selfish aristocrat that views people as mere tools to get what he wants. Later on, Dorian becomes distant with Basil and ends up picking up the evil influences of Lord Henry. This way of thinking eventually leads Dorian to his downfall.

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The books that the world calls immoral are books that show the world its own shame (Lord Henry, chapter 19, pg. 223). This quote was used as an excuse for Dorian to not stop reading the book due to his curious-self. An excuse for Lord Henry sins.

Behind every exquisite thing that existed, there was something tragic (narrator, chapter 3, pg. 41). The quote basically means that behind everything beautiful, there is something dark and tragic. Lord Henry says this after learning about Dorian's past and his parents' death. Despite his dark and tragic past, Dorian is still innocent and beautiful. The quote is also meant to foreshadow Dorian's future and how his beautiful portrait is used to conceal his evil and atrocious actions.

Laughter is not at all a bad beginning for a friendship, and it is by far the best ending for one (Lord Henry, chapter 1, pg. 6). This quotes foreshadowing the chain of misfortunate friendships in the story because laughing to end a friendship is not only mean but evil

Okay, so let's start with our first quote. Hey what's wrong buddy? I don't know man, why should I read your book anymore, it ruined my life! Dude, The books that the world calls immoral are books that show the world its own shame (Lord Henry, chapter 19, pg. 223). So he is obviously referring to the book, it's called no spoiler. No author writes a book hoping that no one can read it. As a writer himself, Lord Henry gave an excused for all the sinful things in his book, saying that it's nothing other than the worlds secret. This ultimately shows what his philosophy of asceticism, where there's no such thing as meaning. Everything spins around beauty and nothing else. So,

same thing from earlier. He said, behind every exquisite thing that existed, there was something tragic (Narrator, chapter 3, pg. 41). Pretty straightforward. The quote basically means that behind every beautiful thing, there is something dark and tragic. The quote is also meant to foreshadow Dorian's future and how his beautiful portrait is used to conceal his evil and atrocious actions. What a villainous saint. Okay, time for some deep quotes. Laughter is not at all a bad beginning for a friendship, and it is by far the best ending for one (Lord Henry, chapter 1, pg. 6). Vocabulary time. Aphorism, an observation that contains a general truth. So, this aphorism means that humor is a good way to start a friendship. Moreover, ending on good terms is always the best way to terminate ones. This quote foreshadows the chain of unfortunate friendships in the story. Say no more to avoid spoiler alerts. Look out, bye!

In our opinion, we would recommend *The Picture of Dorian Gray* because it is a very interesting novel. The plot of the novel is very uncommon and unlike anything else. Besides, the novel addresses very controversial topics and ideas that many of us have thought of and should be exposed to. The novel is a dense read but you can easily find very strong arguments about art, beauty, and how we should live our life. The drastic change in Dorian is just one more surprise that this book has and everyone should give this novel a try.

