

# The Picture of Dorian Gray Das Bildnis Des Dorian Gray: A Literary Exploration of Beauty, Morality, and the Consequences of Selfishness

**The Picture of Dorian Gray**, originally published in 1890, is a Gothic novel by Oscar Wilde that explores the themes of beauty, morality, and the consequences of selfishness. The novel tells the story of Dorian Gray, a young man who sells his soul to the devil in exchange for eternal youth and beauty. While Dorian's physical beauty remains unchanged, his soul becomes corrupted as he indulges in a life of hedonism and vice.

The novel has been praised for its beautiful prose and its exploration of complex moral issues. However, it has also been criticized for its pessimistic view of human nature. Despite this, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* remains one of the most popular and influential works of English literature.



## The Picture of Dorian Gray / Das Bildnis des Dorian Gray - Bilingual English German in parallel vertical

**columns** by Vicki S. Napper

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 1952 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Print length : 180 pages  
Lending : Enabled

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## **Plot**

The Picture of Dorian Gray begins with Dorian Gray, a young man of extraordinary beauty, meeting the artist Basil Hallward. Basil is immediately struck by Dorian's beauty and asks him to sit for a portrait. Dorian agrees, and Basil creates a masterpiece that captures Dorian's youthful beauty and innocence.

After the portrait is finished, Dorian meets Lord Henry Wotton, a cynical and hedonistic aristocrat. Lord Henry introduces Dorian to a life of pleasure and debauchery. Dorian quickly becomes corrupted by Lord Henry's influence and begins to indulge in a series of increasingly depraved acts.

As Dorian's soul becomes corrupted, his portrait changes to reflect his inner ugliness. However, Dorian remains physically unchanged, and his youthful beauty continues to attract others.

Eventually, Dorian's sins catch up with him. He is blackmailed by a former lover and is forced to kill him. Dorian also realizes that his portrait has become so hideous that he can no longer bear to look at it.

In a fit of rage, Dorian destroys the portrait. However, by doing so, he also destroys himself. Dorian's body ages rapidly, and he dies a withered old man.

## **Themes**

The Picture of Dorian Gray explores a number of complex moral issues, including the nature of beauty, the importance of morality, and the consequences of selfishness.

**Beauty** is a central theme in the novel. Dorian Gray is obsessed with his own beauty and believes that it is the most important thing in life. However, Wilde shows that beauty is fleeting and that it is impossible to maintain it without sacrificing other important things, such as morality.

**Morality** is another important theme in the novel. Lord Henry Wotton argues that there is no such thing as morality and that people should live their lives as they please. However, Wilde shows that morality is essential for a happy and fulfilling life. Dorian Gray's selfish and immoral actions ultimately lead to his downfall.

**Selfishness** is a third important theme in the novel. Dorian Gray is a deeply selfish person who cares only about his own pleasure. He is willing to sacrifice anything and anyone to achieve his own goals. Wilde shows that selfishness is a destructive force that can lead to unhappiness and misery.

## **Characters**

- **Dorian Gray** is the protagonist of the novel. He is a young man of extraordinary beauty who is corrupted by Lord Henry Wotton's influence. Dorian becomes increasingly selfish and immoral, and his portrait reflects his inner ugliness.
- **Basil Hallward** is a painter who is obsessed with Dorian Gray's beauty. He creates a masterpiece portrait of Dorian that captures his youthful beauty and innocence.
- **Lord Henry Wotton** is a cynical and hedonistic aristocrat who introduces Dorian Gray to a life of pleasure and debauchery. Lord

Henry believes that there is no such thing as morality and that people should live their lives as they please.

- **Sybil Vane** is an actress who Dorian Gray falls in love with. However, Dorian quickly tires of Sybil and discards her.
- **James Vane** is Sybil Vane's brother. He seeks revenge on Dorian Gray for jilting his sister.

## Style

The Picture of Dorian Gray is written in a beautiful and evocative style. Wilde uses vivid imagery and rich language to create a world that is both alluring and sinister. The novel is also full of philosophical insights and witty dialogue.

## Legacy

The Picture of Dorian Gray has had a profound impact on English literature and culture. The novel has been adapted into numerous films, television shows, and stage plays. It has also been the subject of much critical analysis and debate. The Picture of Dorian Gray is a complex and challenging novel that continues to fascinate and inspire readers today.

The Picture of Dorian Gray is a classic work of English literature that explores the themes of beauty, morality, and the consequences of selfishness. The novel is beautifully written and full of philosophical insights. It is a must-read for anyone interested in literature, morality, or the human condition.

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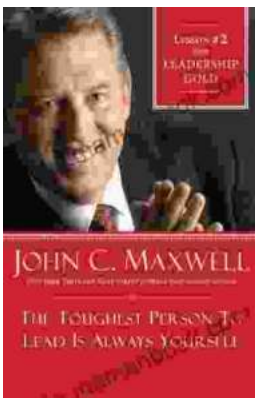
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