



# The Picture of Dorian Gray

*Oscar Wilde*

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**Oscar WILDE (1854 - 1900)**

**The Picture of Dorian Gray**, the only novel by Oscar Wilde, was first published in 1890. A substantially revised and expanded edition was published in April 1891. For the new edition, Wilde revised the content of the novel's existing chapters, divided the final chapter into two chapters, and created six entirely new additional chapters. Whereas the original edition of the novel contains 13 chapters, the revised edition of the novel contains 20 chapters.

The novel tells of a young man named Dorian Gray, the subject of a painting by artist Basil Hallward. Dorian is selected for his remarkable physical beauty, and Basil becomes strongly infatuated with Dorian, believing that his beauty is responsible for a new mode of art. Talking in Basil's garden, Dorian meets Lord Henry Wotton, a friend of Basil's, and becomes enthralled by Lord Henry's world view. Espousing a new kind of hedonism, Lord Henry suggests that the only thing worth pursuing in life is beauty, and the fulfillment of the senses. Realising that one day his beauty will fade, Dorian cries out, wishing that the portrait Basil has painted of him would age rather than himself. Dorian's wish is fulfilled, subsequently plunging him into a sequence of debauched acts. The portrait serves as a reminder of the effect each act has upon his soul, each sin being displayed as a new sign of aging on the portrait.

The Picture of Dorian Gray is considered one of the last works of classic gothic horror fiction with a strong Faustian theme. It deals with the artistic movement of the decadents, and homosexuality, both of which caused some controversy when the book was first published. However, in modern times, the book has been referred to as **one of the modern classics of Western literature**.

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