

The Picture of Dorian Gray

by Oscar Wilde

London, late 19th century



- 1 Basil Hallward was working in his studio on a portrait of a beautiful young man, when he was visited by his pleasure-loving friend, Lord Henry Wotton. Henry was very impressed by the portrait and wanted to meet this charming youth, Dorian Gray. This worried Basil.



- 2 At that moment, Dorian arrived and, to Basil's distress, invited Henry to stay and watch. Immediately Henry began to charm Dorian with his clever ideas about life. Basil continued painting, but Dorian was tired and went into the garden. Henry followed.

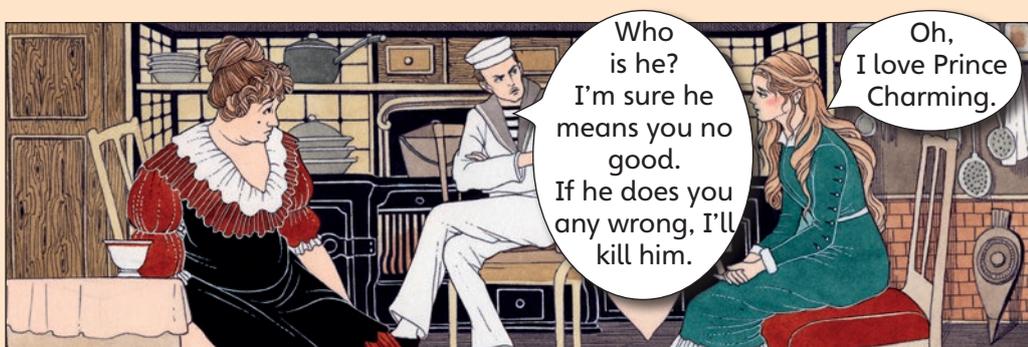




- 3** Dorian listened wide-eyed to Henry's words about the horrors of old age. He had never thought about this before. He viewed his youthful self in the finished portrait and felt troubled. It would never grow old and ugly. He would sell his soul to remain young forever, like the portrait.



- 4** Dorian and Henry soon became great friends and Dorian began to seek new pleasures around London. One day, he confided to Henry that he had been to an old Shakespearian theatre in the East End, and fallen in love with 'Juliet', a beautiful young actress called Sibyl Vane.

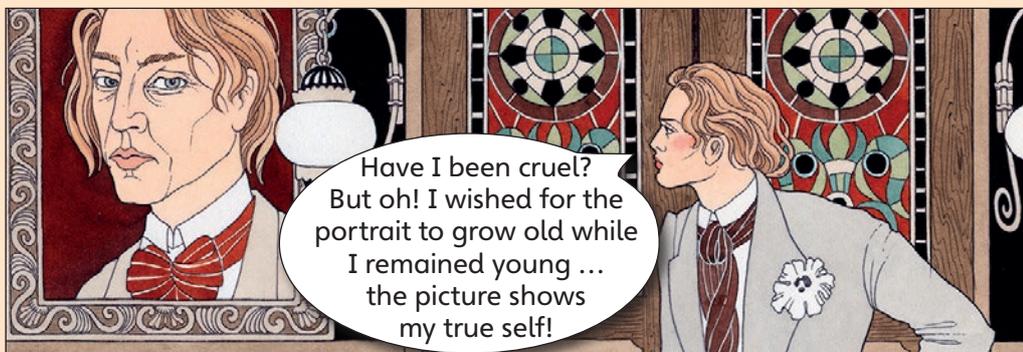


- 5** Sibyl lived with her poor mother and brother James, who was preparing to sail to Australia. James was frightened for his beloved sister. She had told them of her great love of 'Prince Charming', whose real name she did not know, but who came to see her play each night.

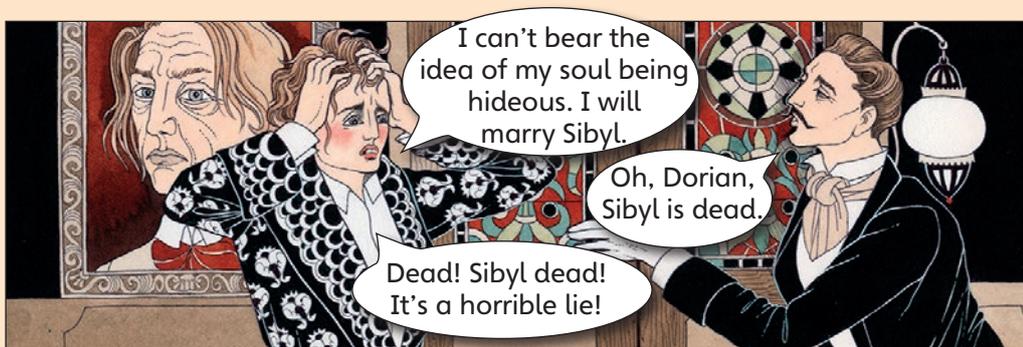




- 6 Finally, Dorian asked Sibyl to marry him. He invited Henry and Basil to see her act so that they could see why he had fallen for her. She looked lovely as Juliet. Then she spoke ... her acting was terrible, meaningless. Dorian, embarrassed and furious, ended the engagement.

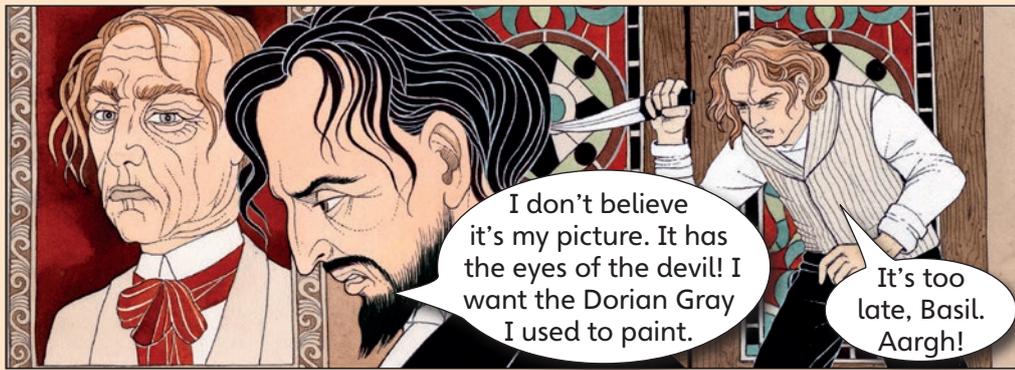


- 7 Dorian left Sibyl and walked the streets. Arriving home at dawn, his eye caught the portrait and he jumped back in horror. The face had changed – his soft expression had become hard and cruel. Suddenly he recalled what he'd said in Basil's studio. Dorian was afraid!

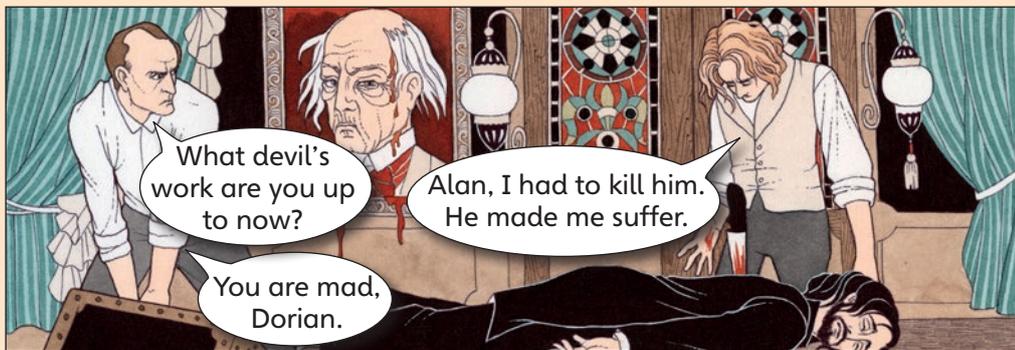


- 8 Next day, Dorian approached the portrait, sick with fear. He was gazing at it with disbelief when Lord Henry arrived. Dorian told him that he'd now decided to marry Sibyl after all. Henry gasped! Dorian hadn't received his note – Sibyl was dead!





9 Years passed. Dorian tried to drown his guilt in a life of pleasure and scandal. Basil came to confront him about his evil ways, and reacted with horror when Dorian revealed the now hideous portrait. In a fit of rage, Dorian blamed Basil for all his suffering, and stabbed his friend to death.

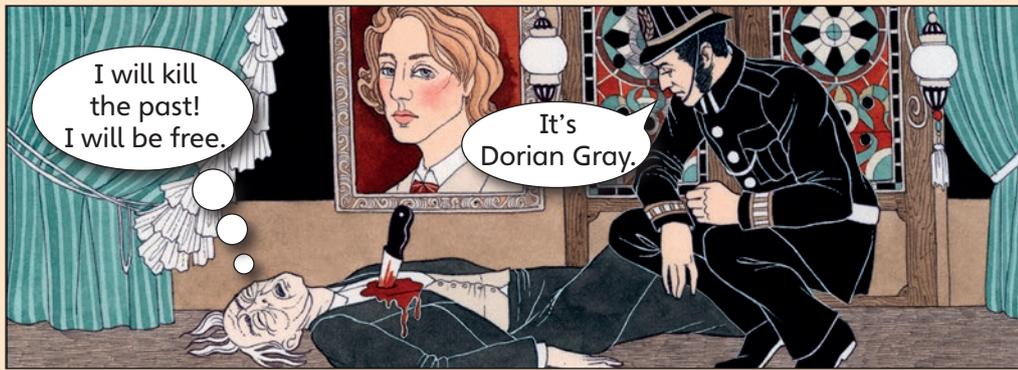


10 Basil's body lay beneath the portrait, which was now sweating blood. A cruel and desperate Dorian contacted a former doctor friend, Alan Campbell, and managed to blackmail the horrified man into helping him get rid of Basil's body.



11 Dorian tried to forget Basil and the portrait. Again he threw himself into his decadent life. One night in a pub by the river, a sailor grabbed him from behind. It was Sibyl's brother, James! But how could this youthful-looking man be Dorian? James ran off in fear.





12 Finally, Dorian had suffered enough. He wanted his old life back. He went to see the portrait. To his horror, it had become even more repulsive. He had to destroy it. He took a knife and stabbed the picture ... The police found the body of an ugly, wrinkled old man beneath a perfect portrait.