

# ***The Picture of Dorian Gray***

**extract from the novel**

Dorian made no answer, but passed listlessly in front of his picture and turned towards it. When he saw it he drew back, and his cheeks flushed for a moment with pleasure. A look of joy came into his eyes, as if he had recognized himself for the first time. He stood there motionless and in wonder, dimly conscious that Hallward was speaking to him, but not catching the meaning of his words.

**The sense of his own beauty came on him like a revelation. He had never felt it before.** Basil Hallward's compliments had seemed to him to be merely the charming exaggeration of friendship. He had listened to them, laughed at them, forgotten them. They had not influenced his nature. Then had come Lord Henry Wotton with his strange panegyric on youth, his terrible warning of its brevity.

That had stirred him at the time, and now, as he stood gazing at the shadow of his own loveliness, the full reality of the description flashed across him. Yes, there would be a day when his face would be wrinkled and wizen, his eyes dim and colourless, the grace of his figure broken and deformed. The scarlet would pass away from his lips and the gold steal from his hair. The life that was to make his soul would mar his body. He would become dreadful, hideous, and uncouth.

As he thought of it, a sharp pang of pain struck through him like a knife and made each delicate fibre of his nature quiver. His eyes deepened into amethyst, and across them came a mist of tears. He felt as if a hand of ice had been laid upon his heart [...] "How sad it is!" murmured Dorian Gray with his eyes still fixed upon his own portrait.

"How sad it is! I shall grow old, and horrible, and dreadful. But **this picture will remain always young**. It will never be older than this particular day of June. . . . If it were only the other way! **If it were I who was to be always young, and the picture that was to grow old!** For that -- for that -- I would give everything! Yes, there is nothing in the whole world I would not give! **I would give my soul for that!**"