

THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY

Dramatized  
by  
Grace Constant Lounsbery

from the Romance  
of  
OSCAR WILDE

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## CHARACTERS

(in order of their appearance)

Basil Hallward, an English artist. A man of about thirty

Parker, valet to Basil Hallward

Lord Henry Wotton, a man of forty

Dorian Gray, a youth of twenty, fair-haired, regular English features, distinguished smart appearance

Mrs. Vane, Sibyll's mother. An actress -- rather passée

Mr. Isaacs, manager of Royal Theatre, Holborn

James Vane, young Cockney -- Sibyll's brother

Sibyll Vane, girl of eighteen. Young actress, with whom Gray is in love

Victor, French valet to Gray

Dr. Allen Campbell, scientist. Man of thirty-five

**ACT ONE**

HALLWARD'S studio. In centre an easel, with large canvas on it. To the left, model stand. Farther left, grand piano. Back stage, large glass windows leading out to an English city garden. Right and left forward, doors.

As curtain rises HALLWARD is painting. PARKER enters left, as HALLWARD crosses to table.

HALLWARD

(looking up)

Well, Parker, who is there?

PARKER

It is Lord Henry Wotton, sir.

LORD WOTTON appears just behind PARKER.

HALLWARD

I can't see him today. I'm waiting for Mr. Dorian Gray.

WOTTON

(walking in)

And who may Mr. Dorian Gray be?

PARKER exit left.

HALLWARD

(annoyed)

My last sitter, Harry.

WOTTON

(hat on piano left)

I must thank you, Basil, for refusing to see me. It's such a jolly change not to be wanted. Still hard at it. Plodding along as usual. By Jove, what a portrait! And you didn't want me to have a look at it? That's delightful! It rouses my curiosity.

HALLWARD

I'm always afraid of your comments, Harry. You're so cynical and so damnably impudent.

WOTTON

Impudence is the mother of success. Basil, this is the best thing you've done yet.

HALLWARD

Ah, you think so?

WOTTON

In fact, I did not know you could do it. There is something --

HALLWARD

What?

WOTTON

Something half hidden, half revealed --

HALLWARD

Ah, you, too, feel that?

WOTTON

You must send it to the Grosvenor.  
(Crosses down center)

HALLWARD

Exhibit this? Never!

WOTTON

And why?

HALLWARD

I put too much of myself in it.

WOTTON

Every great portrait expresses the artist. The subject is a mere matter of accident.  
(Sits left)

HALLWARD

You only confirm my decision. I have no desire to express myself.

WOTTON

Why man, all London will be talking of you.

HALLWARD

By Jove, I hope not.

WOTTON

There is only one thing worse than being talked about, for an artist, and that is not to be talked about at all. I suppose you want fame?

HALLWARD

No, only appreciation.

WOTTON

That's a most stupid remark, but I've discovered that the great artist always seems stupid.  
(MORE)

WOTTON (CONT'D)

He puts into his work all that is best in him, while a man of mere talent, whose art is beyond his reach, is invariably amusing. He entertains us with his unfulfilled dreams.

HALLWARD

A man can't do everything.

WOTTON

Quite so, Basil. No man can realize the triple life.

HALLWARD

The triple life?

WOTTON

The life of the emotion, of the intellect, and of art. One can dissipate in any one way, but not in all three. You have chosen your art, I my intellect, and this boy his brainless beauty.

(Lights cigarette)

Tell me about him.

HALLWARD

He would not interest you.

WOTTON

Dorian Gray.

(Blows out match. HALLWARD starts)

Oh, I heard you just now. His name, Basil, is as fit a subject for my art as for your painting.

HALLWARD

(foot on dais)

For your art? Good God!

(Cross down right)

Let me tell you, Harry, this boy is the soul of innocent purity. I'd not for the world have your cynicism taint him. I know that your scoffing is a pose and your wit as harmless as pretty fireworks, but you shall not see Dorian, for he is essential to my work, to my art. His beauty inspires me to believe in all goodness, to seek truth, to worship his purity, for he is what I am not, what you never were -- an unspotted soul.

(Cross to picture)

WOTTON

Purity is a mode of imperfection.

HALLWARD

You never say a moral thing, Harry, and you never do a wrong thing.

WOTTON

Quite true. I hate action, and nothing is worth doing that is worth talking about. My intellect chisels men as a sculptor works up his clay. In fact, I'm too diverted by observing my friends' vices to have any time for vice myself,  
(sniffs)  
if there is such a thing.

HALLWARD

Your influence is evil.

WOTTON

Indeed I hope so.

(Rises, cross center)

And now I will tell you the history of Dorian.

HALLWARD

You?

WOTTON

Yes. At my cousin's last night, I heard his name for the first time. Behind every beautiful thing there is a tragedy. Worlds have to be in travail that a flower  
(behind dais)

may be born. Gray is a grandson of the late Lord Kelso. His mother was the beautiful Margaret Devereaux. She ran off with a common soldier, who was killed in a duel by a man in Lord Kelso's pay. The mother died when the boy was born. There you have his heritage -- beauty and the daring of blind passion on one side, on the other the doggedness and stupidity of our lower classes.

(Cross up left)

Kelso left him his money although he hated the boy, and they tell me he has been brought up like a Nonconformist minister.

HALLWARD

He is rich now and free to be happy. But why should he interest you so keenly?

WOTTON

I wish to see his youth bud and flower, to warm my hands at the glow of his beauty. He may be to my art a wonderful subject.

HALLWARD

(cross to WOTTON)

You would like to watch his soul under a microscope. I know how subtle, how dangerous you can be, and I ask you for my sake not to meet him. Go when he comes. Promise me, Harry.

WOTTON

I will if he asks me to.

Enter PARKER.

PARKER

Mr. Dorian Gray.

(Cross up left)

Exit PARKER.

Enter DORIAN.

HALLWARD

I have been waiting for you. The sitting today is so important; we have serious work.

(Cross to table)

DORIAN

(center. Looking at WOTTON)

Oh, I hate being serious.

(Down to WOTTON left)

HALLWARD

This is Dorian Gray, Lord Henry Wotton, a most dangerous friend and a gallant enemy.

(They shake hands)

I must send you away now, Harry.

DORIAN

Must I pose today?

WOTTON goes over to the piano and plays softly.

HALLWARD

I have not half an hour's work to finish the portrait -- the time will soon pass.

DORIAN

(climbing up on the model stand)

For you perhaps, but it's beastly boring to keep as still as a statue while you stare at me.

WOTTON

You're quite right, Mr. Gray. At your age every moment should be filled with impatient growth. All patience is dwarfing.

DORIAN

Growth?

WOTTON

(smiling)

Not of stature, but of experience.

DORIAN

I am not a mere boy, sir.

(On dais)

WOTTON

Well, that's a pity. At your age one is like a spectator at the play before the curtain rises. We expect every moment to see an enchanted land. We have not yet seen the glare of the sordid farce that the stage and the world will reveal to us.

HALLWARD

I am sure Dorian's life will not be sordid.

WOTTON

He has so much to forget. Everything that he thinks he already knows. But I must be going, I have an engagement.  
(Rises)

DORIAN

Hallward is tiresome and sulky. It's horribly dull trying to look pleasant. I feel so alone when I pose.

WOTTON

One is always alone, Mr. Gray. If you wish me to stay, you must ask Basil.

DORIAN

Please don't go. I love music. Play to me.

WOTTON smiles, crosses down center.

HALLWARD

Stay, since Dorian wishes it. I suppose it is dull for him, you two can talk. I shall not hear you, only try to remember not to take Harry seriously -- he never means what he says and his influence is bad.

DORIAN

Is it really?

WOTTON

(playing)

All influence, Mr. Gray, is immoral.

DORIAN

And why?

WOTTON

To influence a person is to give him one's own soul, one's thoughts and one's passions. Each man is here to develop himself, few dare to do it. Conscience makes us such cowards and morals warp our nature.

HALLWARD

Your head a little to the right, please.



WOTTON

(playing softly)

If a man dare to live his life freely, to realize every thought, every dream, every emotion, there would be a new joy in life. We are punished for our refusals; we martyrize and mutilate our lives, and the splendid sins that we stifle, corrupt and corrode us. Action purifies -- temptation is conquered only by yielding. Resistance makes it terrible. What your body does is over and forgotten. You fancy that ignorance of life is innocence. You have passions and dreams that fill you with terror. They haunt you at night and the memory of them in the daytime makes you feel afraid. Life is a rose of wonderful petals -- pluck it and free yourself from its tyranny.

DORIAN

(nervously)

Stop!

(WOTTON ceases playing)

Oh, I know you are laughing at me, but your words are as subtle as your music. They trouble me -- there must be, I know there is, some answer for you. Basil, I am tired.

(Sits center on dais)

HALLWARD

You have posed splendidly. What has Harry been telling you? I have only ten minutes' more work now on the background.

DORIAN

(stepping down)

He has made me think.

WOTTON

Oh, I hope not.

PARKER appears with iced drinks -- he crosses to DORIAN, who refuses to drink, crosses left to WOTTON, then crosses right to HALLWARD who refuses. Places tray on table up left and Exit left. HALLWARD, back stage, goes on painting.

WOTTON

Thought will furrow your brow. I have only made you look at your soul for a moment as it is. You will have a marvellously coloured life if you dare to take it.

(Kneels on chair left of  
DORIAN)

You have a wonderful beauty. Women will die for it, and mothers will

(cross to DORIAN)

curse you. But beauty is youth, and youth is the one thing.

(DORIAN smiles)

(MORE)

WOTTON (CONT'D)

Don't smile; you will not when thought has withered your brow, and passion has seared your lips. You have now a few perfect years, fill them full of exquisite sensation and do not be afraid of life and its living; do not become stagnant: grow, change, dare, and treasure your perfect youth -- the youth that is fleeting.

(Give left)

HALLWARD

Dorian, Harry, it is finished.

WOTTON

It is wonderful.

(Cross behind DORIAN right)

DORIAN rises.

HALLWARD

I feel as if it were a living thing that has grown under my hands and escaped from me. It is part of my life and yet it seems almost as if it had now a separate life of its own.

WOTTON

Books and pictures, too, have their fate. They are living thoughts, capable of life and influence.

(Cross up center)

DORIAN has stood silent and sad.

HALLWARD

(cross down right)

Why? What is it, Dorian? Don't you like it?

DORIAN

I am thinking how sad it is. I shall change and grow old, and this portrait will mock me. Today I have found out what life might be, what youth is.

HALLWARD

Dorian!

DORIAN

I could almost hate your picture; I would give the whole world if it could be changed; if it might take my life and grow old. I would give my soul if I might live as this will -- unchanged for a hundred years.

HALLWARD

I should not care for that.

(Sits)

DORIAN

No, your art is everything to you.

HALLWARD crosses to DORIAN. WOTTON  
crosses right to portrait.

HALLWARD

Dorian, are you serious? Then you hate my portrait? Harry,  
this is your doing. What have you been saying to the boy  
while I worked.

(Up to WOTTON)

WOTTON

(leaning on picture)

I have painted for him the portrait of his soul.

HALLWARD

You should have left us alone.

WOTTON

You asked me to stay.

HALLWARD

(takes up a palette knife)

I shall not quarrel with both of my best friends at once.  
Rather than have this picture come between us, I will destroy  
it.

(He raises his hand as if to  
cut up the canvas)

DORIAN springs forward and catches  
his arm.

DORIAN

(rises)

Basil, Basil, don't! It would be murder.

HALLWARD

I am glad of your tardy appreciation.

(He drops the knife)

DORIAN

(cross to HALLWARD)

I feel as if it were myself and I love it.

WOTTON

(amused)

In the East men fancy

(DORIAN turns)

that each thought is a living thing thrown out from the brain  
and having its own life. I am always willing to believe the  
impossible. Facts are only true as long as we do not question  
them. Perhaps some god will answer your prayer, Mr. Gray.

HALLWARD

(cross down left)

I'll send you home when I have varnished and framed you.  
(Cross left behind DORIAN)

WOTTON

Would you care, Basil, to go to the play tonight?

HALLWARD

I am too tired to dress. Excuse me a moment.  
(Exit left)

WOTTON

And you, Mr. Gray?

DORIAN

(embarrassed)

I? I have an engagement.  
(Give left. Gazing at picture)

WOTTON

Is she worth while?  
(Cross right)

DORIAN

(cross to WOTTON)

But how did you know. Lord Harry -- but I fancy you are as wise as the devil.

WOTTON

I may well be.  
(Turns left-center)

I have the advantage of coming on earth several centuries after him.

(Cross left and sits)

Tell me, is she worth while?

DORIAN

She is very pretty and an actress.  
(Cross to dais)

WOTTON

Famous, of course, and forty?

DORIAN

No, young and undiscovered.

WOTTON

Oh, quite undiscovered then. Of course you are going to marry her?

DORIAN

You are laughing at me. Sibyll Vane is the purest --

WOTTON

Poor child!

DORIAN

Why pity her?

(Cross center)

WOTTON

Laughter and pity are a wise man's armour against the world. I would teach you to go through life like a god, with no other emotions. Men are always foolish and often pathetic; but tell me of Sibyll Vane.

DORIAN

I do not know why I should talk to you of her.

WOTTON

(takes chair towards center)

You will always tell me everything, Mr. Gray.

DORIAN

Oh, now you really are laughing at me. I almost think you might hypnotize me.

WOTTON

There are more subtle influences than hypnotism. We can make a man think our thoughts and live our lives for us. Have you ever seen an amœba eat? It simply flows around the object, and makes it part of itself. From this little cell all our bodies are built up, and so one man's thoughts and personality can assimilate another's. Say I have annexed you, and let my experience guide you. Take the pleasure, and let me be the pilot to avoid the shoals of life for you, and you will find yourself doubly strong. I feel sure without me there will be shipwreck ahead of you.

DORIAN

Oh, I know you think me rather stupid.

WOTTON

No, only healthy -- no healthy animal thinks, that is to say, troubles itself about thinking; but to return to Sibyll.

(Sits left)

DORIAN

Well, she acts at a sort of little theatre kept by a vile Jew. I found it out by chance. She really has genius, she has a flower-like face and a little Greek head. She is never the same -- she is Imogene, Juliet -- never herself!

WOTTON

How charming of her! Women are so seldom anything else.

DORIAN

And I love her.

WOTTON

How defiantly you say that!

DORIAN

I shall always be faithful to her if she will marry me.

WOTTON

Faithful?

(Scornfully)

Young men want to be faithful and are not. Old men want to be faithless and cannot. Now what are your actual relations with Sibyll Vane?

DORIAN

(rises)

Sibyll Vane is sacred to me, and for all your cynicism and all the world's censure I shall marry her one day.

(Picks up hat)

WOTTON

Take me to see her.

DORIAN

Never!

WOTTON

(cross up left)

What night shall we say? Thursday?

DORIAN

Even you could not scoff at her.

WOTTON

Remember she is only a petal in the rose of life -- not the whole flower. You will never feel her quite invincible if you are afraid of my seeing her.

(Cross down left-center)

DORIAN

I refuse the challenge.

WOTTON

Tell me something more of yourself, Mr. Gray.

DORIAN

I fear there is little in my life that will interest you. You make me suddenly feel uncomfortably young and very inexperienced. I suppose I am really very uninteresting.

WOTTON

Your infinite possibilities interest me. Never regret your youth for a moment. It is the one experience that we never may repeat.

DORIAN

I expect a great deal of life, but I do not quite know what I shall do yet.

WOTTON

You have lived much abroad. You have even an accent -- oh! a slight accent only.

DORIAN

How annoying!

WOTTON

No, really, I find it quite charming. Don't try to be stereotype, to speak like every one else, to think as your neighbour thinks. We conform too closely to type in England. We have machine-made minds and machine-made morals.

DORIAN

Do you think that a man should reject all standards?

WOTTON

He should be a law to himself, and he only can judge what is best for him.

DORIAN

Of course there is always his conscience to guide him.

WOTTON

Conscience and cowardice are really the same thing. Conscience makes us fear that the world will find us out.

DORIAN

Ah, but surely we suffer when do wrong -- when we are unkind, unworthy, or untrue.

WOTTON

One must be the spectator of one's own life to escape from suffering. But life has exquisite sorrows as well as exquisite joys.

DORIAN

What would you advise me to do with my life?

WOTTON

Tell me your dreams, and I will tell you what to dare.

DORIAN

You will laugh at me and think my dreams commonplace.

WOTTON

You cannot be commonplace.

DORIAN

Yes, I am different from the men I meet every day. I am not satisfied with the empty things that fill their lives. Hunting and cricket and politics are but games.

WOTTON

All life is a game; we should never forget that.

DORIAN

Perhaps; but it seems to me terribly serious. I should like to feel that I could do some good here. I should like to lessen the whole world's suffering, to help other people with my money.

WOTTON

Charity?

DORIAN

Well, yes, philanthropy.

WOTTON

That, too, is a form of pleasure; selfish often and useless always!

DORIAN

Surely you believe we can help the poor sometimes?

WOTTON

No, rather the poor help us to know life; charity, however, is an insult; we give of our superfluity some of the wealth that the workman has created and in which he has a right to expect a just share.

DORIAN

Socialism, Lord Harry?

WOTTON

God forbid that any creed or ism should hold me. I was merely proclaiming philanthropy useless -- except as a pastime.

DORIAN

I fear I cannot be of much use to the world.

WOTTON

It is far better to be beautiful than useful -- we neglect human beauty.

DORIAN

What am I to do if I cannot be useful? I have no art. If I had a talent --



WOTTON

Life is the greatest of the arts, the most difficult. A man should be the architect of his fate -- he should dream, plan and build his life as he builds his cathedral.

DORIAN

What a beautiful thought, I have often felt it. I should always remember it, I shall become the master-builder seeking everything that is beautiful, I shall be at once the priest and the temple -- and Sibyll shall help me.

WOTTON

Sibyll -- ah yes -- and when do I see her?

DORIAN

Whenever you will. I thought you a scoffer -- your words sting often, but there is no poison in them.

WOTTON

And now you think me quite harmless -- how humiliating. I shall forgive you if you will dine with me tonight.

DORIAN

How I wish I could.

WOTTON

Well,

(cross up left)

I shall be at my club -- White's -- at eight. I shall wait until half-past for you. Meanwhile I have here a rare book that may keep you from many a folly, and teach you.

(Cross down to DORIAN)

DORIAN takes the book which WOTTON has drawn from his pocket; he hides it quickly in his coat as he sees HALLWARD in the doorway.

WOTTON

(amused)

Here is Basil.

DORIAN

Hush! Not a word of Sibyll.

(Cross right)

WOTTON

(to HALLWARD as he comes in)

Goodbye, Basil. Remember dinner, at eight.

Exit WOTTON.

HALLWARD

(cross left)

Dorian, may I have a word with you? Don't dine with Harry.

DORIAN

My dear man, why not? You are all principles and prejudices.

HALLWARD

You are only a mere boy.

DORIAN

People are always generous with good advice -- it is the only thing that is not worth keeping.

HALLWARD

You don't talk like yourself.

DORIAN

No, I feel ten years older. And just let me tell you in the future -- I shall do as I please.

(Cross a little to HALLWARD)

HALLWARD

Only promise me you will not see Harry.

DORIAN

I am not afraid of him.

HALLWARD

But I am, for you.

DORIAN

How foolish.

(Cross up left before  
HALLWARD)

I have just time to dress and get to White's at eight o'clock.

HALLWARD

(crosses right, turning  
abruptly)

That is Harry's club.

DORIAN

And mine, too. Good night. Don't forget to send me home soon.

HALLWARD

Dorian, Dorian!

DORIAN

Good night -- good night.

Exit DORIAN.

THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY I-17.

Basil goes sadly up to the picture  
and examines it. Looks towards door  
left.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

The interior of SIBYLL VANE'S dressing-room in an East End theatre. Centre stage -- large dressing-table with glass. On table paints, powders, etc. On the walls a few cheap prints; back stage a door leading into the wings. Left stage a door leading to inner dressing-room.

Discovered: MRS. VANE in a shabby but gaudy dress, covered with cheap jewels. The door opens, and ISAACS, a pompous Jew, comes in, carrying flowers, left.

ISAACS

Evening, Mrs. Vane.

MRS. VANE

(seated right on couch right-center, takes flowers)

Oh, Mr. Isaacs!

ISAACS

I thought I'd bring 'em in myself to you.

MRS. VANE

They are not for me, bless you!

ISAACS

Damn me, if I don't wish they were. I'd send 'em to you myself, if --

MRS. VANE

(reading card on flowers)

"For Miss Vane from Prince Charming." You always were a gallant man, Mr. Isaacs.

ISAACS

You've had plenty of bouquets in your day --

MRS. VANE

That I have --

ISAACS

(slyly)

And lovers, too?

MRS. VANE

Lor' sakes, some one might hear you. Suppose Sibyll --

ISAACS

It's of the girl that I wanted to speak to you. She's uppish with me.

MRS. VANE

Now, sir, don't you mind her. You're a fine man -- a fine figure of a man -- but the girl is romantic.

ISAACS

What I want to know is, how much is acting and how much is --

MRS. VANE

Innocent as a lamb.

ISAACS

A lamb good for the shearing. It may be; it's time she were waking up with an eye to her future. Now this dud hanging round here for a month. Well, I say, if she can't land a husband, she might fish up a bank account.

MRS. VANE

(sadly)

She's got no common sense, and she takes no thought of me.

ISAACS

Right you are, madam. Now your son James goes tonight, and we've business to talk over -- about that loan. I'll wait for you in my office as you are not playing.

(Cross left)

MRS. VANE

Sibyll is so suspicious; better talk it over here, and while she's on the stage.

ISAACS

(cross to MRS. VANE)

Very good, very good. You take my meaning; it 'ud be easier to deal with her, make her see things your way when the brother's gone.

MRS. VANE

All I want is her success. I aim high.

ISAACS

See you don't miss fire.

The door opens and JAMES VANE comes in, left. He looks hostilely from one to the other.

JAMES VANE

Where's the kid, mother?

MRS. VANE

On the stage. Can't you say anything to Mr. Isaacs?

JAMES VANE

(pulling at his cap)

Evening.

(ISAACS grunts and goes out.

Exit left. Angrily:)

What's that blooming Jew want here?

(Cross to MRS. VANE)

MRS. VANE

Why, James, you must not talk so; you make it so hard for me.

JAMES VANE

(cross down left)

I've half a mind to chuck this job, mother, and not go to Australia. Something's up.

MRS. VANE

How can you be so heartless?

JAMES VANE

Heartless!

(Cross up right)

I hate those fellows hanging round after the kid. H'm!

Mother, mother, you must watch over Sibyll.

MRS. VANE

(nervously)

Of course, James, what a thing to say!

JAMES VANE

And that cove who comes to see --

MRS. VANE

Cove! James! He's a gentleman born. I think he's a duke.

JAMES VANE

(cross down left)

That bloke? He ain't old enough --

MRS. VANE

You forget Sibyll is grown up, and we ladies are entitled to admiration, to interest.

JAMES VANE

(seeing the flowers)

More of his stinking flowers!

MRS. VANE

I used to have bouquets, James.

(Puts flowers on table up center)

JAMES VANE

I heard so, and other things, too.  
(Sitting on table left-center)

MRS. VANE

(shocked)

My son!

JAMES VANE

What's yer duke's name?

MRS. VANE

I --

(Cross down center)

JAMES VANE

You don't even know.

MRS. VANE

We call him Prince Charming, you know. He is so polite to me, ah, such a gentleman. "Evening, Mrs. Vane, delighted to see you, and could I have a word with your daughter Sibyll?"  
(Sit on couch)

JAMES VANE

Rubbish!

(Cross up center)

MRS. VANE

You'll see he's a lord.

JAMES VANE

Because he talks rot?

MRS. VANE

No, but because he speaks poor English -- now, only the nobility would dare to do that.

JAMES VANE

Mother, mother, watch over Sibyll.  
(Cross down to MRS. VANE)

MRS. VANE

Don't you worry. It's our last evening, James, my little boy. How I shall miss you.

JAMES VANE

Stow that!

(Cross down left)

MRS. VANE

I can't think where you got your rough ways. You talk like a sailor already -- not like your father; he was soft-voiced --

JAMES VANE

And smooth-tongued?

(Cross right, behind couch)

MRS. VANE

What do you mean, James? He was a gentleman.

JAMES VANE

Were you -- were you married to father?

MRS. VANE

Why, James -- why --

JAMES VANE

Answer me!

MRS. VANE

Well, no, then.

JAMES VANE

The scoundrel!

(Cross down left)

Somehow I knew it.

MRS. VANE

He was not free; he was highly connected.

JAMES VANE

A duke?

(Cross up right)

A Prince Charming? A gentleman, was he? Like this dandy of Sibyll's, and he might act the same.

(Cross to MRS. VANE)

I'll stay.

MRS. VANE

(sadly)

Sibyll has a mother. I never had one, and I liked flowers and favours and I was so young.

JAMES VANE

(shaking his head)

Poor mother! I didn't mean to be rough on you.

(Touching MRS. VANE'S head)

If anyone ever wronged Sibyll, I can tell you he's as good as a dead 'un.

MRS. VANE wipes her eyes. The door left opens and SIBYLL comes in.

SIBYLL

(cross to MRS. VANE)

Well, mother. Why, mother, crying?



JAMES VANE cross down left.

MRS. VANE

No, dear, just a tear or two. James has only an hour before his train goes.

SIBYLL

Dear James! Oh, please don't cry tonight. I'm so happy, so happy,

(rise)

and you must share it with me. Oh, the dear flowers again,  
(cross up center)

how I love them! And what sweet things they say to me; they tell he is coming.

JAMES VANE

Remember --

MRS. VANE

Trust me, James.

Exit MRS. VANE.

JAMES VANE

Sibyll, Sibyll, just a moment. Sibyll, what's all this rot?  
(SIBYLL cross down center)

What's he anyhow but a bloomin' outsider? What's his business here? I tell you, Sibyll, he's a wrong 'un, and if by --

SIBYLL

(at dressing-table, putting  
on make-up)

Hush! Can't you see that you hurt me,  
(cross to table left-center,  
front of James)

and don't you trust me?

JAMES VANE

It's what hits me so hard leaving you like this, so pretty and damn it, good enough for anyone. If I'd the money, I'd take you out of it.

SIBYLL

You're only a boy, James. But you'll make money way out there in Australia, and you'll think of me sometimes.

(Seated right of table left-center)

JAMES VANE

And who'll look after you? Bloody the noses of any freshies who come fooling round! Oh, I know you'll keep straight all right, but sometimes I wish you had a mug on you, well, like mother's. Hard as brick-bat. I'd feel surer.

(Give right)

SIBYLL

Poor mother!

JAMES VANE

Sibyll, couldn't you promise me -- I say,  
(cross to back of table left-  
center)  
just tell me -- you know I'm not really a kid -- that you  
don't love --

(Sit on table)

SIBYLL

(very quietly)

But, dear, I do.

JAMES VANE

Well, wot's it like?

SIBYLL

It's a funny feeling. It puts a gulp in your throat and a  
queer mist before your eyes, and your heart sorts of hurts  
you. You don't know when you're eating whether it's hash or  
what it is. You don't even see the nose on old Isaacs' face,  
every one looks beautiful, everything seems beautiful. You  
walk through the mud and your heart is way up there, up with  
the stars, sort of laughing and singing. There is nothing you  
can't do; you feel like a big sun that can burn up the whole  
fog, and you would like to -- well you would like to hug the  
whole world like this.

(She hugs him)

JAMES VANE

(embarrassed)

Oh, Sibyll! Why, kiddie, you're crying.

SIBYLL

(rise)

I can't help it, I'm frightened. I'm not good enough for him.

JAMES VANE

(rise)

Not good enough! My word!

(Cross center)

Just the same, I think I'll chuck my job and stand by you.

SIBYLL

(cross right)

No, no, darling, you'll go tonight. Some day you'll know what  
it is.

JAMES VANE

Only girls feel like that. But if he don't treat you right!

SIBYLL

You frighten me sometimes; you are so violent.

JAMES VANE

Look here, Sibyll. I have bought a present for you.  
(Takes a revolver from his pocket)

SIBYLL

A pistol, James?

JAMES VANE

You see, it works like this. Now it's loaded.

SIBYLL

What could I do with it?

JAMES VANE

Now it's open, now I'll close it. You fire it like this.

SIBYLL

Oh, do put it away.

JAMES VANE

You've got to keep it. They call it a bulldog. Well, if some one gets fresh, show him its muzzle. It can bite, too. You'll keep it. I'll feel easier.

SIBYLL

(takes the revolver and puts it in the drawer of her dressing-table)

Hush! Here comes mother.

(Cross up stage)

Enter MRS. VANE.

MRS. VANE

Kiss James, dear, I must take him off.

JAMES VANE

(kisses SIBYLL)

Goodbye, kiddie.

SIBYLL

Your cheeks are wet; you're crying.

JAMES VANE

I'm not, damn it!

(Cross right)

God bless you, Sibyll! Remember all I told you. I'll be thinking of you, and looking at you every night when the stars come out. And don't you forget to let anyone know that you've got a brother who is a brother.

SIBYLL

It will be all right, dear. Good luck to you; make a lot of money, and --

JAMES VANE

(laughing through tears)

And then -- you'll leave the show business!

(SIBYLL starts to kiss him)

No, don't kiss me. There are times when a fellow  
(give right)

gets choking. I'll make a home for both of you one day -- I'll be everything that father should have been to you. You forgive me, mother, if I've been hard on you -- you are such a softy, and a fellow sees red sometimes, thinking of what might happen. Well, that's all, I'll just take a header and go.

(Exit)

SIBYLL

James -- James -- gone!

MRS. VANE

It had to be -- don't be so sad, dear -- you've a great chance before you.

SIBYLL

He has gone, mother, it may be for ever. Oh, he's only a boy, I know, but somehow it made me feel safe to have him near, somehow I leaned on him -- I feel so alone and unprotected.

MRS. VANE

You've got me, dear -- don't I count, don't you trust me?

SIBYLL

Yes, yes, but --

MRS. VANE

Listen, dear -- only don't let your heart run away with you. Now about Prince Charming -- this is going on too long. He must come to the point; he must ask you to marry him.

SIBYLL

Don't, don't, you will spoil it all. Can't you see we can trust him.

MRS. VANE

We can't afford to be sentimental. Don't set your heart on him; use your head a bit, darling -- he may not mean anything.

SIBYLL

I don't want anything, anything but his happiness.

MRS. VANE

Well, I mean to do right by you and myself, too. You've got to get something definite out of him -- and tonight, or, mind you, I'll take a hand now.

SIBYLL

Mother, how can you -- you'll spoil everything.

MRS. VANE

There's nothing to spoil, perhaps, but a silly dream.

SIBYLL takes up the flowers and goes with them into the inner dressing-room, shutting the door after her.

Exit MRS. VANE.

Enter ISAACS bowing in LORD WOTTON and DORIAN.

ISAACS

This way, my lord. Make yourselves at home here, gentlemen. Sibyll! Where's the girl?

(He knocks on the door)

Your gentleman friend's here. I've kept the best box for your lordships.

DORIAN

Thank you.

WOTTON

(aside)

He milords me so, he must take me for a grocer.

ISAACS

(center)

No, sir, you'll always be my lord to me, and an 'andsome patron of the arts. I can say we appreciate it, in our effort to make the great national bard applauded.

WOTTON

Estimable! Estimable!

DORIAN

(left-center)

You deserve praise for discovering such a marvel as Sibyll Vane.

ISAACS

She is a pearl, as our immortal Will would have said. And it costs, it costs, sir, to give high art like this.

WOTTON  
(behind couch)

No doubt it does.

ISAACS  
I may say she deserves a West End theatre. If she had backing now --

(Elbowing DORIAN)

DORIAN  
(angrily)  
I'm sure you are needed, Mr. Isaacs, in front.

ISAACS  
I will leave you, gentlemen.  
(Cross up center)  
Yes, duty calls me. Good evening to your lordships. She is in great form tonight -- she will do justice to what I have taught her -- the chance I have given her.

Exit ISAACS left.

WOTTON  
What a world! What a world!

DORIAN  
Yes, and what a life for Sibyll. You will forget it all when you see her -- the surroundings vanish.

WOTTON  
And you still wish to marry her after all, Dorian? It is so conventional to marry an actress.

DORIAN  
Don't be brilliant tonight, Harry.

WOTTON  
(strolls center)  
My dear boy, you have brought me here to be your opera-glasses. You know that you are short-sighted, and you want to look at her through my keen eyes.

DORIAN  
I only wanted to convince you. I am sorry now.

WOTTON  
You would never have been sure of her if you had feared to hear my judgment.

DORIAN  
(cross right)  
She may not have me. If she doesn't, God help me!

WOTTON  
God will not help you, I may.

DORIAN  
(calling)  
Sibyll!  
(Cross center)

SIBYLL  
(opening the door)  
Dorian! Dorian!  
(Runs to DORIAN)

WOTTON takes off his hat. She half runs forward to meet DORIAN, sees WOTTON and stops short. She is dressed as Juliet.

DORIAN  
Don't be frightened. This is only a friend of mine.

SIBYLL  
That is a great deal.

WOTTON  
(shaking hands)  
It is indeed, Miss Vane. But for this evening, I am only an opera-glass.

SIBYLL  
How strangely you talk!

WOTTON  
A glass that is already full of your beauty; but the play is not on yet. I will wait in the box a bit.  
(Give left)  
Basil is all alone.

DORIAN  
Very well, Harry.

Exit WOTTON left.

SIBYLL  
(cross left)  
Oh, who is that man? He has made me feel quite cold. I was so happy, so happy to see you.  
(Cross to DORIAN)  
I have dreamed of it all day,  
(looking round left)  
and how he looked through me -- his eyes are like steel knives.

DORIAN

Oh, Harry is kindness itself, and so clever, and besides you can't guess why I brought him here? He came to scoff at you, and you have defeated him.

SIBYLL

And you care what he thinks?

DORIAN

He is cleverer than I. I trust him as I would my reason, my intelligence. You must play tonight as you have never played before.

SIBYLL

For him?

(Slight movement away from  
DORIAN)

DORIAN

No, for me, and for my boasting of you. Can't you guess, Sibyll? Don't you see how I love you?

SIBYLL

(sadly)

It is only a fairy tale. Mother said so and I said it was true.

DORIAN

It is all true, Sibyll. It is true, dear, because it is our dream.

(Sit right)

SIBYLL kneels.

SIBYLL

Tell me about it.

DORIAN

And Prince Charming wandered alone in the wilderness till he came to a glowing cavern and entered in. It was full of wild beasts; and in the midst of them he found the captive -- a beautiful Princess -- whose beauty held them all at bay, and he freed her and then --

SIBYLL

Then?

DORIAN

They married.

SIBYLL

They married?



DORIAN

Just as we shall. Sibyll, my little love, say it shall be so.

SIBYLL

It is only a fairy tale. No, no, don't kiss me. I am afraid that I might wake up.

DORIAN

My darling, I want you to be my wife.

SIBYLL

But I don't even know who you really are.

DORIAN

Only Prince Charming. I will tell you my name when I come to claim you, after the play.

SIBYLL

It seems to me as if I had been waiting since the very beginning of the world for you. Is love always like that?

DORIAN

It ought to be. I can't tell you all you mean to me. You are the flower of my life. You look like a little white narcissus, full of rare purity and exquisite fragrance -- so frail I almost fear to touch you. Ah, how I want to shelter and shield you, to set you above and beyond this sordid life.

SIBYLL

No life with you could ever be sordid.

DORIAN

I want you to blossom in perfect happiness, surrounded with all the world's beauty. You are to me a poet's dream, darling. Shakespeare has taught your lips to speak music.

SIBYLL

They only murmur: I love you, I love you --

DORIAN

I hear your little heart whisper softly, but mine beats against my breast like a great hammer. Look at me. Your eyes flutter like butterflies, over those eyes where your soul shines to light me.

SIBYLL

I feel so small; I am caught in some current, some great river that whirls me along. Ah! if --

DORIAN

What is it?

SIBYLL

I don't know; your words trouble me; it is terrible.

DORIAN

No, no, it is delicious. I have starved all my life for affection. I feel as if I had met my own soul face to face. All my loneliness vanishes like a darkness. Without you I was weak. I shall be strong for you now.

SIBYLL

I need you too; ah, how I need you! How I hate this place, and these people!

DORIAN

This is a dark cavern, full of reptiles. It will be such fun to snatch you away from Isaacs -- he is the dragon.

SIBYLL

Oh, let us go quickly. I am afraid.

DORIAN

Afraid of what, darling?

SIBYLL

When I try to look into the future I see nothing; everything seems to stop for me; perhaps there is only death.

DORIAN

Death, darling, my love is so strong it would snatch you from Death itself; it would shield you from sorrow. Don't you feel that you are mine?

SIBYLL

Yes, yes; hold me close --

DORIAN

Sibyll, you are trembling.

SIBYLL

I am too happy. Ah, you may tire of me; it may be such joy cannot last but a moment. I should die if you left me, but it would have been worth while.

DORIAN

Leave you? You are rooted in my heart. It would tear my life out to pluck you out.

SIBYLL

Women love like that -- men --

DORIAN

We are children, children moving through the enchanted land, some god loves us dearly -- all life is a garden, we have but to take its fruits.

SIBYLL

When you talk to me everything seems possible -- but when you are not here --

DORIAN

Say you trust me, I need your trust.

SIBYLL

Yes, I do, dear -- but my dream is like those castles we see at sunset, up in the clouds, wonderfully coloured, we wait every minute for them to vanish. It is unreal.

DORIAN

No, no -- everything else is unreal -- this is the one great reality.

SIBYLL

I feel so little and so helpless --

DORIAN

I, too, was adrift and aimless until now -- your trust will make me faithful -- your belief in me will keep me good. A man only finds his true strength, Sibyll, when he knows that some one he loves depends upon him -- and needs him.

SIBYLL

I must go now, and after the play --

DORIAN

After the play we shall go forth together facing life fearlessly.

SIBYLL

Kiss me. Oh, if only, only I could die with your kiss on my lips like that --

DORIAN

Love will grow sweeter.

SIBYLL

It could not.

(Kisses him and hides her  
head on his shoulder)

How can I play now? Tell me, how can I? I feel -- oh! must I play tonight?

DORIAN

(cross left)

You must play as you have never played before, Sibyll. Harry must see you at your best for me.

SIBYLL

Does he matter so much?

DORIAN

Very much, darling.

SIBYLL

I am so happy, so terribly happy that it frightens me. Kiss me now. Go!

Voice of Call-Boy calling outside.

CALL-BOY

(outside)

Miss Vane, your call, please.

SIBYLL

Ready, ring up!

Exit SIBYLL, followed by DORIAN.  
Sound of applause from the house.

Enter MRS. VANE and ISAACS.

MRS. VANE

Fifty pounds is a round sum for a poor woman. But James had to have it.

(Cross right)

ISAACS

(follows MRS. VANE)

Don't you worry, Mrs. Vane. Haven't I done handsomely by you and Sibyll? And now James is off --

MRS. VANE

There's no denying that I feel easier.

ISAACS

(hands her a pen and paper)

You sign here.

MRS. VANE

Then let me read it first.

ISAACS

I'll read it for you. "Received in advance on salary, fifty pounds, in consideration of which I engage my daughter with her consent to play at the salary of four pounds a week for five years under the exclusive management of Jeremiah Isaacs in his theatre or theatres."

(Business with pause)

Well!

MRS. VANE

Well, Sibyll must see it.

ISAACS

Sibyll is under age. What does she care? What does she know of business?

MRS. VANE

Poor little Sibyll!

ISAACS

Oh, come, stop that snivelling. We know each other.

MRS. VANE

Why, Mr. Isaacs!

ISAACS

(cross left)

A man gets tired beating round the bush always. Is the girl to be mine or is she not?

MRS. VANE

I don't know what you mean.

ISAACS

You don't? Well, she does!

MRS. VANE

Stop! No,

(rises, crosses left)

I won't sign it. Indeed I won't! I've been an artist going on thirty years.

ISAACS

Artiste! You're not worth a bob a week! And you know the girl is impossible. Don't take on so. Listen to common sense. If she marries this kid, he'll buy her off to break the contract, and I'll give you a hundred pounds down. Now is that square?

(Cross left)

If she don't marry him, he'll get her anyway, and he won't want her acting here, so he'll back her handsomely. If we haven't something to bind her to us, where'd we be then?

(Over her shoulder)

With this, we'll take a theatre in the West End.

(Center)

MRS. VANE

What, Sibyll desert her mother? Never!

ISAACS

The Bard's Theatre! How's that for a name?

(Excitement and voices outside)

Hello, what's up? Here, sign!

(Noises of booing in the theatre, off stage)

(MORE)

ISAACS (CONT'D)

Hell! They're booing her -- and I'm a ruined man. Ring down the iron curtain, they'll want their money back.

Exit ISAACS.

Uproar without. MRS. VANE signs quickly.

MRS. VANE

She must be ill -- Sibyll, my Sibyll.

Exit MRS. VANE.

Enter WOTTON and DORIAN.

WOTTON

She is quite beautiful, but she can't act. Let us go.

DORIAN

No, no, I must see her. I am sorry, I have made you waste an evening.

WOTTON

Dorian, do not take it so tragically, you will not want your wife to act. If she is as ignorant of life as of art she will be a novel and charming experience.

DORIAN

You can't comfort me. She knows nothing, nothing; I have been a blind fool.

WOTTON

Two kinds of people are fascinating: those who know nothing, and those who know everything.

DORIAN

I feel grey and haggard.

WOTTON

One never should have an unbecoming emotion.

DORIAN

I wish I could take it so lightly. You try to be kind, but I know you despise me.

WOTTON

Come away -- tomorrow you will have forgotten this.

DORIAN

She is coming -- do leave me.

WOTTON

Poor little thing, comfort her.

DORIAN

What can I say? She has waked me from a dream. Go, go, now --

WOTTON

Time always turns tears to laughter -- he who laughs first laughs best.

Exit WOTTON.

Enter SIBYLL.

DORIAN

(cross right)

Sibyll, what is it? Sibyll, say something.

SIBYLL

How they hissed me! It is horrible! Thank God, it is over! It is over for ever. I shall never act again.

DORIAN

(pacing the floor)

How could you? What happened? Are you ill?

SIBYLL

No, I am not ill.

DORIAN

Not ill? What then? You had no right to act like that -- to disgrace me!

SIBYLL

I thought you would understand.

DORIAN

What is there to understand? You have no excuse -- you seemed dazed and stupid.

SIBYLL

I didn't know the acting meant so much to you. I will make you proud of me yet. Yes, yes, I will -- I thought it was me you loved.

DORIAN

Proud of you, proud of you -- you were awkward and stiff, without grace or beauty. Those hisses, that laughter -- and Harry's cold quiet smile. I could not hide, I could not creep out --

SIBYLL

Harry -- Harry.

DORIAN

Of course. It is nothing to you, if you make a fool of me -- before my friends.

SIBYLL

You must listen.

DORIAN

You are maddening -- yes, yes, explain yourself.

SIBYLL

It was all so strange. I moved in a kind of dream -- your kiss on my lips -- I could scarcely remember the words, they came to me slowly as if from a distance -- my brain would not work.

DORIAN

Your brain!

SIBYLL

I was thinking of our love, of you; then the Romeo smelling of garlic, pompous and ugly -- it was offensive, I hated to touch him -- I was yours, I was sacred, all the rest was so unreal, so cheap, so tawdry -- I wanted to run away, to hide on your shoulder, to forget every one but you -- ah, now it is over you will take me away. I can't make you understand.

(He turns away)

Why did you mind so much?

DORIAN

You were not thinking of me, not an instant. You knew I had told every one of your talent -- I had brought Harry to see a great actress -- you have shamed me absurdly --

SIBYLL

Harry? Absurd?

DORIAN

I shall never forgive you.

SIBYLL

What shall I do -- what shall I do now?

DORIAN

I don't know, I don't care. If you are not an actress you are nothing, nothing.

SIBYLL

Don't, don't, it hurts so. Before I knew you acting was my whole life. I thought the beautiful shadows real -- their world was mine -- you freed my soul from prison -- say you understand, my love; my love of you, it is so complete and so sacred -- but we have been playing, the play is over and you promised to claim me.

DORIAN

Yes, the play is over.



SIBYLL

Tell me your name and take me away with you to the world of realities -- we are awake now.

DORIAN

You woke me brutally -- the beautiful genius I worshipped has vanished -- you have thrown it all away -- who are you?

SIBYLL

Is it possible you have been only acting?

DORIAN

Acting -- I leave that to you!

SIBYLL

You are testing me, trying me, you do not mean what you say -- say you will forgive me. I have failed you just this once, don't, don't be cruel. I love you better than anything in the world; I'll be a slave to you --

DORIAN

You disgrace me, and then you reproach me.

SIBYLL

But, only, don't leave me -- I could not bear it -- you wouldn't do that. Ah, don't make me desperate -- I should die, I should die -- I could even kill myself -- see, see.  
(At table, takes out  
revolver)

DORIAN

Women always say that.

SIBYLL

Ah, you think I couldn't, you think me too weak?  
(Drops revolver on table)

DORIAN

I'll not stay for a scandal. Kill yourself if you like I don't care.

SIBYLL

Ah, you can't know what you're saying -- it is not you talking.

DORIAN

I hate hysterics. It is all over, we have made a mistake, we were dreaming --

SIBYLL

Dreaming? Mother said that --

DORIAN

I want to be fair with you, you have killed my love -- I can't lie about it --

SIBYLL

Ah!

DORIAN

If you had had genius you could have surmounted your life and your birth, but without it there is a fatal chasm between us. It is for your good and mine to find this out before it is too late --

SIBYLL

Stop -- stop --

(Hands on ears)

DORIAN

I am going now.

SIBYLL

Kiss me. Ah, let me forget this for one moment. You are tearing my life out by the roots, bit by bit --

DORIAN

This must end.

SIBYLL

Tomorrow, when your anger has fallen, you will see me, you will come back! Hush -- hush, don't answer.

DORIAN

No, never.

SIBYLL

You won't leave me like that? Not yet, ah, not yet! I won't let you --

(Throws her arms around him)

DORIAN

Let me go, let me go!

Exit DORIAN.

SIBYLL

Ah, I can't bear it, I can't bear it.

Falls.

END OF ACT TWO

**ACT THREE**

DORIAN GRAY'S room in London.  
Luxurious furniture. Windows back  
stage. Left stage large panelled  
oak doors. Right stage two doors,  
one leading to DORIAN'S bedroom.  
Left stage, the portrait concealed  
by a large screen.

VICTOR, DORIAN GRAY'S man, enters  
right, carrying breakfast tray,  
morning papers, and letters.

VICTOR

(putting down tray, goes to  
door of DORIAN'S room and  
listens)

Encore, que diable!

(He picks up letters and  
looks at them)

Où a-t-il trouve ce sommeil, la?

(He picks up a photo of  
SIBYLL VANE and kisses it)

Ah, ha! voilà les nuits de vingt ans!

(He examines carefully the  
letters. The door opens  
right and DORIAN in a  
dressing-gown enters.  
Starting:)

Monsieur has slept well?

DORIAN

What time is it, Victor?

VICTOR

Two o'clock, monsieur.

DORIAN

Post this letter to Miss Sibyll Vane. No, never mind; I'll  
post it myself. I shall have only coffee for my déjeuner,  
take the other things away.

(VICTOR removes things)

Stop a bit. Who put that screen there?

VICTOR

Monsieur, not I.

DORIAN

(nervously)

Yes, yes, I remember!

(MORE)

DORIAN (CONT'D)

(He sits down to his  
breakfast)

My letters.

VICTOR cuts open letters and hands  
them one at a time to him.

VICTOR

Ce-ci from Lord Harry. Urgent, monsieur. I would not wake  
monsieur. Is there no answer?

DORIAN

Not at all. If he calls, you may say that I have gone out.  
(He keeps the letter unopened  
in his hand)

VICTOR

Bien.

(He starts to go, crosses  
left)

DORIAN

And, Victor, I am not at home to anyone. Oh --  
(He sees an excuse to bring  
VICTOR back)

Any news in the papers?

VICTOR

Non, monsieur, nothing of the vrai monde. Suicide of an  
unknown actress. A lover catches  
(with a chuckle)  
his lady with her own husband, and sues him for breach of  
contract.

(Laughs)

Voilà.

DORIAN

That will do.

VICTOR

Bien, monsieur; bien, monsieur.

DORIAN

Remember, not at home. You may go.  
(VICTOR crosses left)

Oh, Victor, my magnifying glasses.  
(VICTOR gets glass from table  
up right, crosses to  
DORIAN'S right)

Lord Harry's writing is so small.

VICTOR

Voilà, monsieur.

DORIAN

Well, what are you waiting for?

VICTOR

Bien, monsieur.

(Takes tray, crosses to left.  
Exit left)

DORIAN

(reassured, rises, crosses  
left)

He has seen nothing.

(DORIAN locks the door, goes  
towards the picture and  
draws away the screen)

At five in the morning one can fancy anything. Can thought  
affect chemical atoms?

(Examines portrait with  
magnifying glass)

It is true. The mouth is the same, but the smile has a  
cruelty that I have never -- my God! Poor Sibyll! What indeed  
if this portrait is the picture of my soul; if this is the  
ugliness of my sin; the smile of my cruelty.

(He tears up the letter)

I have well learned the danger of yielding to Harry's  
subtlety.

Knocking at hall door. Voice of  
WOTTON without.

WOTTON

My dear boy, let me in! It is I, Harry!

DORIAN instinctively replaces the  
screen before portrait.

DORIAN

I cannot see anyone.

WOTTON

(outside)

You must!

DORIAN

No! No!

WOTTON

I can't bear it; don't refuse me.

(DORIAN unlocks the door.  
Coming in:)

I am so sorry, Dorian! Don't think too much about it.

DORIAN

About what?

WOTTON  
About Sibyll Vane.

DORIAN  
Oh, Sibyll Vane.

WOTTON  
Of course. It is dreadful, but it isn't your fault. Were you very cruel?

DORIAN  
Brutally. No, it was not all my fault last evening. You were so hard, so beastly cynical. I might as well tell you, Harry, I have decided we can be friends no longer.

WOTTON  
What?

DORIAN  
You have dominated me utterly. You sit in my brain and seem to think for me. And the thoughts are evil.  
(Rises)

WOTTON  
We will not quarrel now -- now when you need me. I am sorry about it all.

DORIAN  
I am not sorry. I know myself better for all this.  
(Leaves table, gets above it)

WOTTON  
(goes to fireplace)  
I am glad you take it so lightly. I expected to find you tearing your hair.

DORIAN  
Don't sneer. I have learned now what conscience is -- a divine warning teaching us to keep our souls beautiful.

WOTTON  
How shall you begin?

DORIAN  
By marrying Sibyll.

WOTTON  
Marrying Sibyll --  
(Leaves fireplace and crosses to DORIAN who is right)

DORIAN  
I know your reasons, but she will be my wife.

WOTTON  
(excitedly, hand on shoulder)  
Your wife? My letter -- did you get my letter?

DORIAN  
Yes.

WOTTON  
Well?

DORIAN  
Nothing.

WOTTON  
I do not understand.

DORIAN  
To tell the truth, I did not read it.

WOTTON  
Dorian, Dorian, haven't you seen -- haven't you read the papers?

DORIAN  
What of them? Has anything happened?

WOTTON  
Happened? Sibyll --

DORIAN  
What?

WOTTON  
(shakes his head)  
Don't be frightened -- is dead.

DORIAN  
(violently)  
Sibyll is dead? Dead? You lie! how dare you --

WOTTON  
They went to fetch her after the theatre, and they found her lying on the floor of her dressing-room.

DORIAN  
(sits)  
Oh, Sibyll, my poor little Sibyll!

WOTTON  
There was a revolver beside her.  
(DORIAN movement)  
A clear case of suicide.  
(A little down left)  
I wrote you to keep indoors and to see no one.  
(MORE)

WOTTON (CONT'D)

If there is a scandal you must not be in it. A man's life may be what he likes in London but his reputation must be kept spotless. No one must suspect that you knew her.

(Cross towards DORIAN)

It's only common sense.

(He walks away to left)

You must show yourself at the Opera tonight.

DORIAN

(not listening)

I have murdered her as surely as if I had cut her little throat with a knife. Oh, Sibyll! Sibyll!

WOTTON

It is far better than to have watched her throat wither and wrinkle.

DORIAN

I had just written her my first love-letter -- to her -- a dead girl!

WOTTON

She will always live sweetly in your memory. Time will not fade her, nor reality tarnish her.

DORIAN

And I was brutal to her, Harry, brutal!

WOTTON

(crosses to DORIAN)

If you were cruel last night, stop and think what you would have been to her when the first bloom of beauty and novelty were gone? You fêted and petted by women of your rank, she growing coarser as time would betray her caste. She would have suffered and you would have hated her for all her suffering. No, it is better so --

DORIAN

(rises)

I don't want to believe you. Life is so pitiless, so terribly pitiless. What shall I do now?

WOTTON

It is better for her sake to keep it all quiet. Men would jeer, women mock at her, and they would all think --

DORIAN

They would not dare. She was as pure as a lily.

WOTTON

To protect her no one must suspect you. That's why you must be seen at once in public.



DORIAN

How can you think me so heartless?

WOTTON

You owe it to her.

(Coldly)

DORIAN

Perhaps I am heartless; there is something terrible, tragic and yet beautiful, and it was for me for me that she killed herself.

WOTTON

(works round to right side of  
the stage behind DORIAN)

Perhaps she wished to die while you loved her. Women usually survive a man's love, and torment him with keeping its grave green. Say only, Dorian, that you have plucked a flower and kept it from withering.

DORIAN

If only I had not been cruel to her.

WOTTON

(sits on right edge of table)

It was the actress you loved;

(takes portrait)

the Juliet who never lived, and so never could die; it was not Sibyll Vane; it was the Imogene --

DORIAN

Your words drug my pain, but they poison me. I had wanted to give you up, and now only you are left to me.

WOTTON

Life is before you, and you need me, Dorian. I will leave you now.

(Turns, puts left hand on  
DORIAN'S shoulder)

We dine at seven. The Opera at nine, Box 25.

DORIAN

Must I?

WOTTON

Yes, surely. For her sake. It is only common sense.

Exit WOTTON left.

DORIAN

(follows WOTTON, stops left  
of portrait)

Will the portrait always change, and bear my sins always?  
Will it grow old with me?

(MORE)

DORIAN (CONT'D)

Shall my smile stay sweet and its smile grow bitter? Shall I escape? Shall it pay the penalty? And if so, after all I shall be safe, safe; that is a great deal.

(He calls)

Victor, Victor!

Enter VICTOR.

VICTOR

What is it, monsieur?

DORIAN

My bath; I shall dress for the Opera.

VICTOR

Mr. Hallward is here, monsieur.

DORIAN

I told you I could see no one.

(Crosses right but is left of table)

Enter HALLWARD, crosses towards DORIAN center.

Exit VICTOR left.

HALLWARD

Dorian, my poor Dorian! How you must be suffering! And her mother, what did she say? The poor woman!

DORIAN

(irritated)

How should I know?

HALLWARD

You have not seen her? Shall we go together?

DORIAN

(cynically)

I am not going out until I go to the Opera.

HALLWARD

The Opera! Don't jest with me. The Opera, and the girl unburied?

DORIAN

But I must not be suspected.

HALLWARD

Suspected?

DORIAN

Mixed up in it, as Harry says, for her sake. People would talk.

(Comes from door right to right of table)

HALLWARD

Damn the talk!

(Cross right-center)

Harry has tampered with you again, Dorian; it is not you who are speaking.

DORIAN

When I heard she had killed herself --

HALLWARD

Killed herself?

(Cross to left of table)

Is it certain she killed herself?

DORIAN

I felt as you do.

(Sits on right of table)

Now I see she died at the height of her beauty, as Juliet died. She has gained immortality, instead of becoming fat and middle-class.

HALLWARD

(shocked)

Dorian!

DORIAN

Well, Basil, you came here to console me; and you find me consoled and so you are furious.

HALLWARD

Dorian! Dorian! You would not take my warning. You are becoming only an echo of Harry. He is a strong man; he can mishandle life and survive.

(Drops down left)

But you, with your candid soul, cannot. You lack moral stamina:

(DORIAN rises, walks right then up towards portrait and down right again)

already you jest about things that are sacred.

(Sits)

You play with sin, thinking you can control it. You can't, and Harry will, little by little, push you on and on. He tries epigrams on you as a doctor would poisons, and this vivisectioning diverts him hugely.

DORIAN  
(angrily)  
Harry found words to comfort me.

HALLWARD  
Perhaps so. I came to offer my sympathy, but also to tell you  
that I want my portrait.  
(Rises, crosses up left of  
chair)

DORIAN  
Portrait?

HALLWARD  
I shall exhibit.

DORIAN  
(instinctively places himself  
in front of the screen)  
Exhibit?  
(Walks in front of portrait)

HALLWARD  
Why is that screen there?  
(One step towards portrait)

DORIAN  
The light was too strong.

HALLWARD  
What rot! Let me see it!  
(Stepping up towards  
portrait)

DORIAN  
No, not today.

HALLWARD  
Not see my own picture. If you do not like it, then let me  
take it back.

DORIAN  
No, no. It is not that; indeed, I love it. I feel very  
curiously about it.

HALLWARD motions to take hold of  
the screen.

DORIAN  
If you look, everything is over between us.

HALLWARD  
(backing away from DORIAN  
towards left, down stage)  
(MORE)

HALLWARD (CONT'D)

How strange you are today! You will lend it to me for a month for my show?

DORIAN

You told me you would never exhibit it. Why? Had you some secret reason?

(Getting a step or two away from portrait)

HALLWARD

(turns away to left)

You would laugh at my reason. I think it foolish now.

DORIAN

(eagerly)

Tell me, tell me!

(Steps down stage towards HALLWARD)

Perhaps it is not so foolish as --

HALLWARD

Is anything wrong with the picture?

DORIAN

I don't know.

HALLWARD

Have you noticed something that at first you did not see?

DORIAN

(frightened)

Basil, you know.

HALLWARD

(cross down to table left-center)

I will tell you all that I know. Your portrait took shape almost unconsciously; it grew; my life-blood seemed to flow along the brush and to nourish it. It was more real, more living to me than your real self. It had a life that was all its own.

DORIAN

Is that possible?

HALLWARD

Some force beyond my control seemed to mould it, as if to a separate fate.

DORIAN

(center)

Is that all?

HALLWARD

It is as nearly living as a picture can be. I almost fancied it might come to life, but that is impossible.

DORIAN

Of course, impossible!

HALLWARD

You seem disappointed?

DORIAN

No, only relieved.

HALLWARD

I may see it now?

DORIAN

Don't ask me. You gave it to me to do what I liked with. You shall see it, perhaps, when I am an old, old man.

HALLWARD

Yes, I gave it to you -- you are not yourself today, but I understand.

DORIAN moves and sits at table,  
left of it.

DORIAN

I am upset still -- so upset by last night.

HALLWARD

(moves to back of DORIAN)

My poor boy, forgive me. For the portrait, do what you like with it.

DORIAN

(shakes hands)

Thank you, Basil, and goodbye.

Exit HALLWARD left.

DORIAN

What a terrible mirror! And how it will haunt me! even if I never again should look at it. The face will reflect me, grow bestial and sodden, and change with my sins. Sins? Yet, why should I sin? Ah, Sibyll, Sibyll, your love could have saved me. It will grow wrinkled and old and be pitiful. I can see it now, feel it staring at me. God! it is too horrible; it is hidden away there, but how shall I lock it out and forget it for ever?

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

DORIAN'S room. Same as Act Three,  
but with different furnishings.

It is a wild, rainy night. Twenty  
years have elapsed since last act.

Discovered WOTTON, much aged, and  
DORIAN, dining at a small table  
served by VICTOR, who is now an old  
man. DORIAN'S face has kept its  
youth, but his manners and  
movements are those of a man broken  
by life. During the whole scene he  
is immensely nervous and impatient.  
It is half-past nine, and the  
dinner is over.

DORIAN  
Victor, devil, how slow he is!

VICTOR  
Voilà, voilà, monsieur.  
(At double doors)

DORIAN  
Take away these things, and be quick about it.

Ring.

DORIAN  
The bell, Victor.

VICTOR  
Liqueur, monsieur? What will you, monsieur? Tout le monde  
cannot stay jeune like monsieur.

WOTTON  
He is quite right, Dorian; your youth is a miracle. We are  
old men.

VICTOR  
Monsieur a raison.

WOTTON  
The devil! He did not need to back up my statement.

VICTOR  
C'est tout naturel.

WOTTON  
Natural! So it is, but none the less odious.

DORIAN

What did he mean by that?

Exit VICTOR, having cleared the table and served coffee, cigars and liqueur.

WOTTON

A phrase -- nothing more.

VICTOR re-enters, whispers to DORIAN.

DORIAN

Impossible. I cannot see her. Tell her I'm ill.

WOTTON

Duchess of Monmouth?

DORIAN

Will you see her for me?

WOTTON

Yes. She might not believe Victor.

(Exit)

DORIAN goes to window, looks out, draws the curtains closely, and, trembling with fear, crosses to desk. From the drawer he takes a hypodermic syringe, which he plunges in his arm.

WOTTON

(re-enter)

She believed me.

DORIAN

It was good of you to dine with me tonight, because today I am forty years old.

WOTTON

Forty years old! You second Faust, what is your secret?

DORIAN

(nervously)

Secret? There is no secret. Why --

WOTTON

I beg your pardon; curiosity is not one of my vices. You had something to tell me.



DORIAN

Something serious, to explain why I left Selbourne Abbey so suddenly.

WOTTON

Because a poacher who was shot accidentally got on your nerves.

DORIAN

There's more in it than that. But I have asked them to bring you the result of the coroner's inquest.

WOTTON

Why to me? And why should the man's name or fate interest you? It was not you who shot him -- you are not guilty?

DORIAN

(starting)

Guilty?

WOTTON

Calm yourself, Dorian. Your nerves are all on edge. You had a reason for not wishing your man to report to you here.

DORIAN

He will be at your house within an hour, Harry.

(Paces floor nervously, cross  
down center)

If only I were sure of it! if only it could be he!

WOTTON

Who, Dorian?

DORIAN

James Vane. Who else, of course?

WOTTON

Vane? Who is James Vane?

DORIAN

Sibyll's brother.

WOTTON

Why should it be Sibyll's brother? What a memory you have! I'd quite forgotten that little actress.

DORIAN

Harry, I must tell this to some one. The man has come back; he dogs my footsteps; he haunts me. I ran across him in an opium den; he followed me out, down a low dark street; he seized me by the throat. I can feel his fingers there still. All he said was, "You shall pay now for the death of my sister." It was horrible.

(MORE)

DORIAN (CONT'D)

(He stops, starts, looks out  
of the window and comes  
back)

WOTTON

Go on, go on. You are quite safe with me.

DORIAN

Harry, I had an inspiration. I asked him to take me under the light, to look at my face well. "How old do you think I was twenty years ago?" I asked him. He stared at me. "It can't be, it can't be," he stammered and let me go. But, Harry, he came back. I saw his face at the window in Selbourne Abbey! The next morning a poacher was shot accidentally. If only -- Harry, you see nothing!

(He looks out of the window)

WOTTON

It is preposterous because a girl shoots herself, her brother must turn up to murder you after twenty years! He is a madman, and you, you must promise me to see a doctor.

DORIAN

I have sent for Allen Campbell.

WOTTON

You two quarrelled.

DORIAN

(carelessly)

It doesn't matter.

WOTTON

What have I heard about him lately? Oh, I have it. He has invented a wonderful dynamo.

DORIAN

It is apropos of that that he is coming; I expect him shortly.

WOTTON

Here is my programme: Get Campbell to prescribe for you, leave me a free hand, I will ask Scotland Yard to send a detective and watch out for your man. You should have told me sooner. I will bring you news of your poacher. I don't like to leave you alone like this. You're quite sure about Campbell?

DORIAN

Quite sure.

WOTTON

Don't let your mind dwell on these petty worries. Think of your success. All men have envied you, and many a woman has ruined herself for you.

DORIAN

Stop, Harry! Not a word of my life! I have tasted everything -  
- the flower of pleasure is dust and ashes.

WOTTON

You have not always kept within bounds.

DORIAN

My nights are sleepless; my days are haunted. I carry disaster and ruin with me. I loathe myself.

WOTTON

Confession is fifty per cent. of absolution -- you talk like a revivalist.

DORIAN

(rises)

I am reviving. I have discovered a spark of decency; I am learning to renounce.

WOTTON

And thereby hangs a tale?

DORIAN

Precisely. She was very beautiful, very fresh and innocent, and her youth freshened me as much as it tempted me. It was at a seaside village, and she thought me a sailor -- a common sailor. I ran away not to betray her.

WOTTON

Having discontented her for ever with her lot, you left her to cry her eyes out. Egoism, Dorian, and you profit by a new sensation of virtue.

DORIAN

(angrily)

Don't take hope away from me! Harry, stop sneering, or by --  
!

Enter VICTOR.

WOTTON

You are certainly ill, Dorian.

DORIAN

Victor, what is it?

VICTOR

A box, monsieur, sent by Dr. Allen Campbell.

DORIAN

Let the men bring it in.

VICTOR

Dr. Campbell is on his way here.

WOTTON

I will be back by twelve. Au revoir, Dorian.

The men bring in a heavy box and  
put it down. Exit left-center  
WOTTON. VICTOR returns with men.

DORIAN

Put it there. Victor -- Victor!

VICTOR

Oui, monsieur?

DORIAN

Did you notice how strangely those men looked at me?

VICTOR

No, no, monsieur. Monsieur is surely ill.

DORIAN

Yes, that is it. I am ill.

A ring is heard.

DORIAN

Hurry, Victor! It must be Campbell.

(Exit VICTOR left-center)

Oh, God! To have it over; to know the truth. Some disaster is  
closing about me!

Enter VICTOR.

VICTOR

Le Docteur Campbell.

CAMPBELL comes down to left-center.

DORIAN

(right-center. Stretching out  
his hand)

Good evening, Campbell

CAMPBELL puts his hands in his  
pockets. Exit VICTOR.

CAMPBELL

I hoped never to set foot in a house of yours.

DORIAN

And yet you are here.

(Cross up center)

CAMPBELL

Your offer struck me in a moment --

DORIAN

When it could not be refused.

CAMPBELL

Yes, precisely; but how did you know about my affairs?

DORIAN

It is my business to know what my enemies do, and intend to do.

CAMPBELL

You want to have me in your power?

DORIAN

You have always been in my power. I know --

CAMPBELL

Stop.

DORIAN

Don't let's quarrel. Sit down. You are to tell me about your invention, and I am to help you to float it.

CAMPBELL

(sitting down)

It is a small and very powerful dynamo. It can generate a spark that would kill a man at a hundred yards. It is destructive and its powers of usefulness are manifold. For instance, in cremating it can totally destroy a body -- You are not listening.

DORIAN

(at window)

Yes, yes, I am -- go on.

CAMPBELL

That is all. As you know, I can't float a company to handle it.

DORIAN

And I can.

CAMPBELL

Precisely, but at what cost to me?

DORIAN  
(surprised)

Cost?

CAMPBELL  
Yes, what do you want of me? You have neither philanthropy  
nor scientific interest.

DORIAN  
You are quite right. Allen, I am ill, and I sent for you!

CAMPBELL  
I am not a physician.

DORIAN  
You do not practise, and that is why I want your opinion. I  
cannot tell my life to ordinary doctor. That's why I want  
your verdict.

CAMPBELL  
Well?

DORIAN  
(slowly)  
Allen, am I -- am I likely to be going insane?

CAMPBELL  
No; few men get what they deserve in this world. What are  
your symptoms?

DORIAN  
I don't know. I loathe life, and yet I hate dying. I'm  
haunted by fear. Footsteps seem to follow me. I start at my  
shadow.

CAMPBELL  
You've got to pull up; to give up everything.

DORIAN  
Everything?

CAMPBELL  
Drugs, first of all!

DORIAN  
(rises)  
How did you know that?

CAMPBELL  
A man's life and his vices show in every gesture. I can see  
the havoc and the cause of each symptom. Your face does not  
deceive me.

DORIAN

I knew you were dangerous. Yet somehow I trust you. I am suffering, Campbell, as no one has ever suffered before. I corrupt everything I touch. I can't help it and nothing resists me.

CAMPBELL

And you resist nothing.

DORIAN

I see that man's face.

(Looks towards the window)

CAMPBELL

What man?

DORIAN

I forgot, you do not know. Some one who has sworn to kill me.

CAMPBELL

Why don't you have him locked up?

DORIAN

I feel as if it would be useless, as if it were fate, and I almost wish sometimes that he had succeeded.

CAMPBELL

You, you fear a scandal! You are as careful to keep your reputation clean as to keep your life unclean.

VICTOR enters and brings a letter.

VICTOR

De la part de Lord Harry.

Exit VICTOR.

DORIAN

(tears open the letter and  
reads out loud)

"The sailor from Melbourne, shot accidentally while poaching at Selbourne Abbey, was James Vane." It was he! Campbell, congratulate me. Harry said I had good luck. I am a free man.

(His tone changes from relief  
to exultation, then to hate  
and brutality)

The blackguard, he is dead. I wish I could have seen him die. I wish I could have been shooting that morning and have shot him down. It was too good a death. I wish I had him here and could see him, I could --

(He raises his hand as if to  
strike)

CAMPBELL

(recoils and rises)

Stop, Gray! You are a monster!

(Furious)

DORIAN

But you don't understand.

CAMPBELL

I'm going.

DORIAN

(collapsing)

I forgot myself. Forgive me. You see how far gone I am, and you only can help me.

(Sits)

CAMPBELL

(cross to DORIAN)

I'm going to tell you what no one else would dare to say. I hope it will warn you. If a man can exult over a dead man as you did just now, he wouldn't stop at crime itself. He is at heart a murderer, and any chance circumstance will make him a criminal.

DORIAN

Campbell!

CAMPBELL

You are horrified? Here's my verdict. You will not go mad. It's more serious, probably fatal. It is a breaking down of the power of self-control. You are saturated with pleasure as some men are with alcohol. Your will is half eaten up.

DORIAN

What can I do now?

CAMPBELL

For the first time I pity you. It takes a strong man to play with evil, a careful surgeon not to get blood poisoning. It is Lord Harry who has brought you down to this; he has fed you on poison year in and year out.

DORIAN

You mean he hypnotizes me?

CAMPBELL

No, there are a thousand ways of suggestion, of control, of thought influence. You have feared his laugh more than all things upon earth. You are the victim of every desire. You are the spectacle and the puppet that he mocks.



DORIAN

It is true -- every word of it. I have hated him cruelly; but I revolt in vain. I do evil and I suffer even in doing it, and then he laughs at me, and I shudder and sin again, and do something worse.

CAMPBELL

Get out of the country; let Dorian Gray die. Do anything, but leave, and leave at once.

DORIAN

(rises)

Tomorrow I'll start for the Continent.

CAMPBELL

Tomorrow? Will you have the will to do it? Remember, Gray, such a moral collapse will lead only to crime, as I said; you must exercise the atrophied muscle of control every moment, and beware of those sudden attacks of anger.

DORIAN

Allen, you are my friend, the only friend that I have. I will obey you implicitly. You can call on my lawyer tomorrow. I'll give him full instructions to float a company. I will take half the shares for you, and the other half we will sell.

CAMPBELL

(steps back to table right-center)

This will save me from bankruptcy. I wish I could have given you a demonstration; at the hospital I could show you how it cremates a body.

DORIAN

No, no, no! My nerves at this moment could not have stood that. It is good to be friends with you again, Allen.

CAMPBELL

One moment. You have in your possession certain papers.

DORIAN

Papers?

(Left)

Papers, I remember it was a serious matter -- you made a mistake in a prescription -- the girl died -- and to shield yourself you delivered a false death certificate.

CAMPBELL

It was horrible -- I gave up practising to devote my life to science.

DORIAN

You wished to confess publicly -- I saved you from that and made you keep silence.

CAMPBELL

I have often repented my silence -- but there was my wife --

DORIAN

Don't repent, you have done much good.

CAMPBELL

What proofs of this affair exist?

DORIAN

Only your letters in your handwriting. They are in a safe place, don't worry about them.

CAMPBELL

You could ruin me, my reputation, my children's name -- good God!

DORIAN

It is quite certain that any jury would hold you responsible -- and probably inflict the maximum penalty --

CAMPBELL

Stop! Will you give me those papers?

DORIAN

I have no wish to hurt you, I need you. I shall return them to you tomorrow, at my lawyers.

CAMPBELL

Ah!

DORIAN

Friends, is it?

(CAMPBELL cross up center)

Write down your telephone number.

(He takes the number. Enter

VICTOR)

Victor, my cloak; I'm going out;

(VICTOR fetches cloak)

I shall not return; you may send Lord Harry word not to wait for me.

VICTOR

Monsieur has his latch-key.

DORIAN

Yes; you may lock up and go to bed.

Exit VICTOR.

CAMPBELL

I wish you had seen the dynamo' at work, Dorian.

DORIAN

I take your word for all its marvels.

Exit CAMPBELL and DORIAN.

Enter VICTOR.

VICTOR

(taking brandy to table right-center)

"Victor here, Victor there," and monsieur's face! The diable est pour quelque chose.

Enter BASIL HALLWARD left.

HALLWARD

Good evening, Victor.

VICTOR

Good evening, 'msieu.

HALLWARD

Is Mr. Gray in?

VICTOR

Mr. Gray has just gone out with Dr. Campbell.

HALLWARD

(turns)

Campbell? Allen Campbell? That is strange. Will he be back?

VICTOR

Monsieur will not return. He say: "You may close the house, Victor." It is his birthday. He is forty years old today.

HALLWARD

Forty years old today! And he is as young as ever?

VICTOR

The same, monsieur; the very same.

HALLWARD

Dr. Campbell's house is not five minutes from here. I am catching the twelve o'clock train for Paris. I think I shall try to find your master; I must him before I go. Good night, Victor.

VICTOR

Good night, Monsieur Hallward.

He closes up and puts out the lights. He goes out and shuts the door.

The stage is quite empty for a minute, then DORIAN enters, followed by HALLWARD. He turns the lights on.

HALLWARD

It was good luck to find you like that on the doorstep.

DORIAN

You have something so very important to say to me? I am worn out.

HALLWARD

I've only ten minutes. I am starting for Paris, leaving England for ever perhaps.

DORIAN

What brings you here at this hour?

HALLWARD

I -- I --

DORIAN

Brandy and soda?

(He mixes a drink and hands it to him)

HALLWARD

You astonish me! You place me at a disadvantage. I came here to talk with you -- to appeal to you; if need be to plead with you.

DORIAN

What's wrong?

HALLWARD

Now I have seen you and looked in your face, I know it isn't true, it can't be true!

DORIAN

(impatiently)

Come, come.

HALLWARD

For the sake of our friendship have a little patience.

DORIAN

You're claiming the right of a friend to bore me.

HALLWARD

Can't you see I am suffering? I came here to accuse you; and you have made me feel like a penitent.

DORIAN

What have I done to you?

HALLWARD

You have wronged yourself; all the world is talking about you.

DORIAN

Not to be talked about is to be a nobody.

HALLWARD

No one can afford to be talked of in that way; one by one your friends have disappeared; suicide, disaster, insanity have overtaken them.

DORIAN

Weaklings! Would you make me responsible for every young fool who cannot play with fire?

HALLWARD

Dorian, you must clear your name. No man is indifferent to such slanders.

DORIAN

Do you believe them?

HALLWARD

No, for sin cannot conceal itself. For pity's sake, tell me that it is not possible.

DORIAN

Men saddle me with the sins they are afraid of. I never have cared what they said or thought of me, and yet much is true. Only one is never accused of the right crime.

HALLWARD

Is there any truth in the world's accusations?

DORIAN

I keep a diary of my life from day to day. You have had something to do with this?

HALLWARD

I?

DORIAN

And I am tempted, half tempted to show it to you.

HALLWARD

I want a plain answer.

DORIAN

(angrily)

Never fear, you shall have it.

HALLWARD

(step back)

You half frighten me, Dorian.

(Puts his hand on his  
shoulder)

DORIAN

(drawing away)

Don't touch me!

HALLWARD

I wonder could there be two Dorians? How I wish that I could see the real one; but only God can see your real soul.

DORIAN

(goes up towards portrait.  
Furiously)

Come, you shall see it.

HALLWARD

Don't blaspheme.

DORIAN

You have chattered enough about corruption; you shall face it.

HALLWARD

What are you going to do?

DORIAN

Draw back that curtain. My life is behind it. Come.

HALLWARD hesitates. DORIAN draws back the curtain and exposes the portrait which has grown old, hideous and leering.

HALLWARD

My God! What does this mean?

(Falling back against table)

DORIAN watches him, a smile upon his face.

HALLWARD

It can't be true; it is not my picture; it is mildewed; the paint has changed. No, no, it is true!

DORIAN

It is like a living corpse.

HALLWARD

It is a satyr's face.

DORIAN

It is my own soul.

HALLWARD

How foul; how revolting! What a devil!

DORIAN

(calmly)

Each man has heaven and hell in him.

HALLWARD

Go down on your knees, Dorian, and pray for --

DORIAN

(furiously)

Stop that canting mockery!

HALLWARD

(shrinking from him)

Man, you are horrible!

(Cross backwards to table  
right)

It is revolting; this cursed thing leers at us. It is  
loathsome, as vile as you are.

(Sits at table right)

DORIAN

(furiously)

Stop!

HALLWARD

If no one else dares to tell you, I will --

DORIAN

Stop, I say!

(Cross to HALLWARD)

HALLWARD opens his mouth to speak.  
DORIAN quickly wishing to stop him,  
swings his arm from behind and puts  
his hand on his mouth. HALLWARD  
tries to throw him off.

HALLWARD

Let me go!

DORIAN

No, by God! not till --

HALLWARD

(struggling)

Dorian!

As DORIAN feels HALLWARD  
struggling, the brute in him  
awakes. He throws him and chokes  
him slowly. When he lies quiet, he  
throws him aside and gets up.

DORIAN

Damn him! He struggled. I saw red. Now it is done. What to  
do? No one knows he is here. I must get rid of this thing.

(Cross left)

Campbell's machine is there and no use to me. No one knows I  
am here. This is work for Allen. He must do it. He shall do  
it! There is no going back now. I must get rid of this.

(At the telephone. Sits)

Hallo, hallo, yes, 3725 Mayfair. Is that you, Allen? Wrong?  
No, what should be wrong? Only I want to take the midnight  
for Paris. I can't see my lawyer tomorrow with you. I have a  
cheque for you to start the business, and papers -- important  
papers--concerning you. You will come at once? I'll let you in  
myself.

(DORIAN slides back the door  
into the bedroom and drags  
the corpse in. He closes the  
door and slides the panel,  
concealing the picture. He  
goes to his desk and writes  
out, a cheque; he then  
unlocks a drawer in the desk  
and takes out certain  
papers)

No one saw him come in, and no one knows I am here. What if  
Campbell refuses? He cannot -- he would not dare.

He looks carefully through the  
papers and puts them in his pocket.  
He gives a look out of the window,  
sees CAMPBELL coming. Goes down and  
lets him in, returning quickly with  
him.

CAMPBELL

You cannot catch your midnight train, Gray; what is it?

DORIAN

Sit down, sit down. We must be calm. Yes, very calm.

CAMPBELL

Something has happened.

DORIAN

Campbell, a dead man is in there.

(Up center)



CAMPBELL  
A dead man?  
(Half rising)

DORIAN  
(checks him, steps to  
CAMPBELL)  
I want you to destroy the body! I want to see your invention  
work.

CAMPBELL  
A body here! Are you mad? How did he die?

DORIAN  
Campbell, it was suicide.

CAMPBELL  
(up to DORIAN)  
Gray, you are lying?  
(Recoils)  
I don't know and I won't know anything about this. In a life  
like yours, terrible things may happen. Suicide perhaps, but  
had you no hand in it?

DORIAN  
It was my fault, but I could not help it.

CAMPBELL  
(rises)  
I am going. Remember, I know nothing of it.

DORIAN  
Allen, it was murder.

CAMPBELL  
Have you come to that?

DORIAN  
If you do not save me, it means death for me.

CAMPBELL  
And what of that? I am going now. I can only say I will not  
denounce you.

DORIAN  
Allen, there is your cheque; it is for a large amount.

CAMPBELL  
Could you think for a moment that I would take money now?

DORIAN  
You don't want it. You don't need it now!  
(Starts to ring bell)

CAMPBELL

What are you going to do?

DORIAN

Call Victor and send for the police.

CAMPBELL

You dare?

DORIAN

I dare anything. I will not be convicted alone, Allen; listen -- you sent the dynamo here; you went out with me; no one knows that you did not come in with me; so you are my accomplice.

CAMPBELL

It is not possible! I won't be threatened, nor will I be mixed up in your crime.

DORIAN

(center)

It will not be for the first time.

CAMPBELL

What do you mean?

DORIAN

Your letters.

(CAMPBELL crosses to DORIAN)

Oh, you can kill me if you like;

(CAMPBELL recoils)

there are duplicates safe with a trusted friend, and they will be published.

CAMPBELL

(sits left-center, sinking  
into a chair)

I am lost. There is no way out.

DORIAN

(cross to CAMPBELL)

It is all so easy. Near my room there is a door that leads to the street. You can go out that way. No one need see you. You are doing nothing wrong. The fate of all your family depends on it. Allen, say you will do it.

CAMPBELL

(slowly)

I must.

DORIAN

(helping him up)

Come.

CAMPBELL

Don't touch me! I loathe you as I loathe myself. Heaven help me.

(DORIAN opens the door into  
the next room)

Help me to carry in the dynamo.

They carry the box into the next  
room.

DORIAN

How long will it be?

CAMPBELL

Not long. I will go out and not see you when it is done.

DORIAN

Good. Your cheque.

CAMPBELL takes cheque and tears it  
into bits. He starts to close the  
door.

DORIAN

Campbell, if you should be tempted to leave before the work  
is done, you will not forget the letters.

CAMPBELL closes the door without a  
word.

DORIAN

Safe, I am safe again. No one knows -- no one knows. It is  
all over. There is not a trace left now to tell of it. I  
shall go away for ever. The portrait -- what of the portrait?  
I must see, I can't go until --

(He pushes the panel exposing  
portrait. He staggers)

It is horrible! horrible! There is blood on the fingers --  
red blood oozing from it. What if some one should find it? I  
have trembled before it all these twenty years. There is only  
one thing to do; it must be done quickly; it is only justice.  
It is all that stands between me and a new life.

He takes a dagger from the table  
and goes over to the portrait. He  
stabs it in the heart, tripping on  
the cord of the electric light. He  
falls with a horrible groan. The  
lights go out. Silence. A bell  
rings -- knocking at the door.

WOTTON

(calling outside left-center)

Dorian, Dorian, let me in. It is I.

(MORE)

WOTTON (CONT'D)

(They break open the door left. VICTOR and WOTTON rush in. They turn on the light, WOTTON to centre. By DORIAN:)

No, it is not he.

They look at the portrait, which is young and smiling. A shrivelled old man lies on the floor, a dagger in his heart. The face is the face of a satyr.

VICTOR

(crossing behind DORIAN to WOTTON to right. Starting)

The rings! they are monsieur's rings!

WOTTON

This is the opal I gave him. It is Dorian Gray.

VICTOR has lifted DORIAN'S head and is looking into his face.

CURTAIN