

УДК 811.111(075)

ББК 81.2Англ-9

У13

**Уайльд, Оскар.**

**У13** Портрет Дориана Грея = The Picture of Dorian Gray / Оскар Уайльд. — Москва : Издательство АСТ, 2024. — 320 с. — (Читаем на английском без проблем).

**ISBN 978-5-17-165260-9**

«Портрет Дориана Грея» — роман о роковой сделке: вечная красота в обмен на... Впрочем, о чем это я? Вы ничем не жертвуете. Молодость, красота, невинность — ваши, а пороки и старость достанутся портрету. Согласны? Конечно согласны. Разве можно от такого отказаться?

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комментарий, 2024

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**THE PICTURE  
OF  
DORIAN GRAY**



## CHAPTER 1

The studio was filled with the rich smell of roses. Lord Henry Wotton<sup>1</sup> was sitting on the divan and smoking innumerable cigarettes. Through the open door came the distant sounds of the London streets.

In the centre of the room stood the full-length portrait<sup>2</sup> of a young man of extraordinary personal beauty, and in front of it, some little

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<sup>1</sup> **Lord Henry Wotton** — лорд Генри Уоттон

<sup>2</sup> **full-length portrait** — портрет в полный рост

distance away<sup>1</sup>, was sitting the artist himself, Basil Hallward<sup>2</sup>.

As the painter looked at the gracious and comely form he had so skilfully mirrored in his art, a smile of pleasure passed across his face. He suddenly started up, and closing his eyes, placed his fingers upon the lids.

“It is your best work, Basil, the best thing you have ever done,” said Lord Henry. “You must certainly send it next year to the Grosvenor<sup>3</sup>. The Academy is too large and too vulgar.

The Grosvenor is really the only place to exhibit a painting like that.”

“I don’t think I shall send it anywhere,” the painter answered, moving his head in that odd way that used to make his friends laugh at him at Oxford. “No, I won’t send it anywhere.”

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<sup>1</sup> **some little distance away** — на небольшом расстоянии

<sup>2</sup> **Basil Hallward** — Бэзил Холлуорд

<sup>3</sup> **Grosvenor** — Гросвенор



Lord Henry elevated his eyebrows and looked at him in amazement through the thin blue wreaths of smoke<sup>1</sup>. “Not send it anywhere? My dear fellow, why? What odd people you painters are! A portrait like this would set you far above all the young men in England<sup>2</sup>.”

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<sup>1</sup> wreaths of smoke — кольца дыма

<sup>2</sup> A portrait like this would set you far above all the young men in England. — Этот портрет вознёс бы тебя много выше всех молодых художников Англии.

“I know you will laugh at me,” Basil replied, “but I really can’t exhibit it. I have put too much of myself into it<sup>1</sup>.”

Lord Henry stretched himself out on the divan and laughed. “Too much of yourself in it! Upon my word, Basil, this man is truly beautiful. Don’t flatter yourself, Basil: you are not in the least like him<sup>2</sup>.”

“You don’t understand me, Harry,” answered the artist. “I know that perfectly well. Indeed, I should be sorry to look like him. I am telling you the truth. It is better not to be different from other people. The stupid and ugly have the best of this world. Dorian Gray<sup>3</sup> —”

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<sup>1</sup> I have put too much of myself into it. — Я вложил в него слишком много самого себя.

<sup>2</sup> you are not in the least like him — ты ничуть на него не похож

<sup>3</sup> Dorian Gray — Дориан Грей

“Dorian Gray? Is that his name?” asked Lord Henry walking across the room towards Basil Hallward.

“Yes, that is his name. I didn’t intend to tell it to you.”

“But why not?”

“Oh, I can’t explain. When I like people immensely, I never tell their names to any one. When I leave town now I never tell my people where I am going. If I did, I would lose all my pleasure. It is a silly habit, I dare say. I suppose you think that’s very foolish?”

“Not at all,” answered Lord Henry, “not at all, my dear Basil. You seem to forget that I am married, so my life is full of secrets, I never know where my wife is, and my wife never knows what I am doing. When we meet we tell each other the most absurd stories with the most serious faces.”

“I hate the way you talk about your married life, Harry,” said Basil Hallward, walking towards the door

that led into the garden. "I believe you are really a very good husband, but that you are ashamed of it. You are an extraordinary fellow. You never say a good thing, and you never do a wrong thing. Your cynicism is simply a pose."

"Being natural is simply a pose," cried Lord Henry, laughing; and the two young men went out into the garden together. After a pause, Lord Henry pulled out his watch.

"I am afraid I have to go, Basil," he said in a quiet voice. "But before I go I want you to explain to me why you won't exhibit Dorian Gray's picture. I want the real reason."

"I told you the real reason."

"No, you did not. You said that it was because there was too much of yourself in it. Now, that is childish."

"Harry," said Basil Hallward, looking him straight in the face, "every portrait that is painted with feeling is a portrait of the artist, not the

sitter. The reason I will not exhibit this picture is that I am afraid that I have shown in it the secret of my own soul."

Lord Henry laughed. "And what is that?" he asked.

"Oh, there is really very little to tell, Harry," answered the painter, "and I am afraid you will hardly understand it. Perhaps you will hardly believe it."

Lord Henry smiled and picked a flower from the grass. "I am quite sure I'll understand it," he replied, staring at the flower, "and I can believe anything."

"The story is simply this," said the painter. "Two months ago I went to a party at Lady Brandon's. After I had been in the room for about ten minutes, I suddenly realized that someone was looking at me. I turned around and saw Dorian Gray for the first time. When our eyes met, I felt the blood leave my face. I knew that this boy would become my whole soul,

my whole art itself. I grew afraid and turned to quit the room."

"What did you do?"

"We were quite close, almost touching. Our eyes met again. I asked Lady Brandon to introduce me to him. It was simply inevitable."

"What did Lady Brandon say about Mr. Dorian Gray?"

"Oh, something like 'Charming boy. I don't know what he does — I think he doesn't do anything. Oh, yes, he plays the piano — or is it the violin, dear Mr. Gray?' Dorian and I both laughed and we became friends at once."

"Laughter is not at all a bad beginning for a friendship," said the young lord, picking another flower, "and it is the best ending for one."

Hallward shook his head. "You don't understand what friendship is, Harry. Everyone is the same to you."

"That's not true!" cried Lord Henry, pushing his hat back, and

looking at the summer sky. "I make a great difference between people. I choose my friends for their beauty, my acquaintances for their good characters and my enemies for their intelligence. A man cannot be too careful in the choice of his enemies. Of course, I hate my relations. And I hate poor people because they are ugly, stupid and drunk —"

"I don't agree with a single word you have said. And I feel sure that you don't agree either."

Lord Henry touched his pointed brown beard with his finger, and the toe of his boot with his stick. "How English you are, Basil! An Englishman is only interested in whether he agrees with an idea, not whether it is right or wrong. I like persons better than principles, and I like persons with no principles better than anything else in the world. But tell me more about Mr. Dorian Gray. How often do you see him?"

“Every day. I couldn’t be happy if I didn’t see him every day.”

“How extraordinary! I thought you only cared about your art.”

“He is all my art to me now,” said the painter. “I know that the work I have done since I met Dorian Gray, is the best work of my life. He is much more to me than a model or a sitter. In some strange way his personality has shown me a new kind of art. He seems like a little boy — though he is really more than twenty — and when he is with me I see the world differently.”

“Basil, this is extraordinary! I must see Dorian Gray.”

Hallward got up from his seat and walked up and down the garden. After some time he came back. “Harry,” he said, “Dorian Gray is the reason for my art. You might see nothing in him. I see everything in him.”

“Then why won’t you exhibit his portrait?” asked Lord Henry.

“An artist should paint beautiful things, but he should put nothing of his own life into them. There is too much of myself in the thing, Harry — too much of myself! Some day I will show the world what that beauty is. For that reason the world will never see my portrait of Dorian Gray.”

“I think you are wrong, Basil, but I won’t argue with you. Tell me, is Dorian Gray very fond of you?”

The painter thought for a few moments. “He likes me,” he answered, after a pause. “I know he likes me. Of course I flatter him dreadfully and tell him things that I should not. He is usually very charming to me, and we spend thousands of wonderful hours together. But sometimes he can be horribly thoughtless and seems to enjoy causing me pain. Then I feel, Harry, that I have given my whole soul to someone who uses it like a flower to put in his coat on a summer’s day.”

“Summer days are long, Basil,” said Lord Henry in a quiet voice. “Perhaps you will get bored before he will. Intelligence lives longer than beauty. One day you will look at your friend and you won’t like his colour or something. And then you will begin to think that he has behaved badly towards you —”

“Harry, don’t talk like that. As long as I live, Dorian Gray will be everything to me. You can’t feel what I feel. You change too often.”

“My dear Basil, that is exactly why I can feel it.” Lord Henry took a cigarette from his pretty silver box and lit it. Then he turned to Hallward and said, “I have just remembered.”

“Remembered what, Harry?”

“Where I heard the name of Dorian Gray.”

“Where was it?” asked Hallward with a slight frown.

“Don’t look so angry, Basil. It was at my aunt’s, Lady Agatha’s. She told me that she had discovered this won-