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ray by Oscar Wilde THE PREFACE The artist is the creator of beautiful things. To reveal art and conceal the artist is art's aim. The critic is he who can translate into another manner or a new material his impression of beautiful things. The highest as the los a mode of autobiography. Those who find ugly meanings in beautiful things are corrupt without being charming. This is a fault. Those who find beautiful meanings in beautiful things are the cultivated. For these there is hope. They are the elect to mean only beauty. There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written, or badly written. That is all. The nineteenth century dislike of realism is the rage of Caliban not seeing his own face in a glass. The moral life of man forms part of the subject-matter of the artist, but the morality of art consists in the perfect use of an imperfect medium. No artist desires to prove anything. Ev an be proved. No artist has ethical sympathy in an artist is an unpardonable mannerism of style. No artist is ever morbid. The artist can express everything. Thought and language are to the artist instruments e are to the artist materials for an art. From the type of all the arts is the art of the musician. From the point of view of feeling, the actor's craft is the type. All art is a noce surface and symbol. Those we cod so at their peril. It is the spectator, and not life, that art really mirrors. Diversity of opinion about a work of is that one admires it intensels. All art is quite useless. OSCAR studio was filled with the rich odour of roses, and when the light summer wind stirred amidst the trees of the garden, there came through the open door the heavy scent of the lilac, or the more delicate perfum thorn. From the corner of the divan of Persian saddle-bags on which he was lying, smoking, as was his custom, innumerable cigarettes, Lovd Henry Wotton could just catch the gleam of the honey-sweet summer summers. In the performance of the divan of Persian saddle-bags on which he was lying, smoking, as w
The Picture of Dorian G
west form of criticism i
whom beautiful things
dislike of romanticism i
en things that are true c
of an art. Vice and virtu
ho go beneath the surfa
tics disagree, the artist WILDE CHAPTER 1 The
e of the pink-flowering
and honey-coloured blo
                                                                                                              ains that were stretched in front of the huge window, producing a kind of momentary Japanese effect, and making him think of those pallid cessarily immobile, seek to convey the sense of swiftness and motion. The sullen murmur of the bees shouldering their way thr ough the long unmown grass, or circling with mo
e long tussore-silk curt
dium of an art that is ne
                                                                                                                          und the dusty gilt horns of the straggling woodbine, seemed to make the stillness more oppressive. The dim roar of L
om, clamped to an upright easel, stood the full-length portrait of a young man of extraordinary personal bea
mself, Basil Hallward, whose sudden disappearance some years ago caused, at the time, such public e
looked at the gracious and comely form he had so skilfully mirrored in his art, a smile of pleasur
notonous insistence ro
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ondon was like the bourdon note of a distant orga
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            uty, and in front of it, some little distance away
n. In the centre of the ro
was sitting the artist hi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             citement and gave rise to so many strange con
ectures. As the painter
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              d across his face, and seemed about to linger
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 e passe
                                                                                                                                 tarted up, and closing his eyes, placed his fingers upon the lids, as though he sought to im "It is your best work, Basil, the best thing you have ever done," said Lord Henry langu
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    prison within idly. "You must cert
here. But he suddenly s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               his brain some curious dream from which he
eared he might awake.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                ainly send it next year to the Grosvenor. The
                                                                                                                                 nd too vulgar. Whenever I have gone there, there have been either so many peopl
Academy is too large a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              e that I have not been able
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  to see the pictures, which was dreadful, or
                                                                                                                                have not been able to see the people, which was worse. The Grosvenor is re that odd way that used to make his friends laugh at him at Oxford. "No,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ally the only place." "I don't thin I won't send it anywhere." Lord Henry
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   k I shall send it anywhere," he answered, to
so many pictures that I
ssing hís head back in
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     elevated his eyebrows and looked at him i
                                                                                                                                 he thin blue wreaths of smoke that curled up in such fanciful who
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     Not send it anywhere? My dear fellow, wh
n amazement through t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           rls from his heavy, opium-tainted cigarette.
                                                                                                                                n? What odd chaps you painters are! You do anything in the
y? Have you any reaso
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     world to gain a reputation. As soon as you have o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ne, you seem to want to throw it away. It
is silly of you, for there
                                                                                                                                 is only one thing in the world worse than being talked
                                                                                                                                                                                                                              about, and that is not being talked about. A portrait like th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       is would set you far above all the young
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         ied, "but I really can't exhibit it. I have
Il the same." "Too much of yourself in
                                                                                                                                                                                                                        capable of any emotion." "I know you will laugh at me," he repl
men in England, and m
                                                                                                                                 ake the old men quite jealous, if old men are ever
                                                                                                                                  into it." Lord Henry stretched himself out on
                                                                                                                                                                                                                   the divan and laughed. "Yes, I knew you would; but it is quite true, a
put too much of myself
it! Upon my word, Basi
                                                                                                                                  I, I didn't know you were so vain; and I
                                                                                                                                                                                                           really can't see any resemblance between you, with your rugged strong fac
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         e and your coal-black hair, and this y
                                                                                                                                 s as if he was made out of ivory a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           u have an intellectual expression an
oung Adonis, who look
                                                                                                                                                                                                    nd rose-leaves. Why, my dear Basil, he is a Narcissus, and you--well, of course yo
d all that. But beauty, re
                                                                                                                                                                                              ectual expression begins. Intellect is in itself a mode of exaggeration, and destroys the
                                                                                                                                 al beauty, ends where an intell
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            harmony of any face . The moment
                                                                                                                                  one becomes all nose, or all f
                                                                                                                                                                                       orehead, or something horrid. Look at the successful men in any of the learned professions. Ho w per
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        fe ctly
one sits down to think,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        hideous they
are! Except, of course,
                                                                                                                                   in the Church. But then in the C
                                                                                                                                                                                 hurch they don't think. A bishop keeps on saying at the age of eighty w h at he was told to sa
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             w hen he was a boy
                                                                                                                                 tural consequence he always look
e, never thinks. I feel quite sure of t
                                                                                                                                                                                s absoluteľy delightful. Your mysterious young friend, whose n  ame you have never
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        t old me, but whose pic
of eighteen, and as a na
ture really fascinates m
                                                                                                                                                                                 hat. He is some brainless beautiful creature who should be a lways here in w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      inter when we
                                                                                                                                                                                  want something to chill our intelligence. Don't flatter yours elf, Basil: you a
have no flowers to look
                                                                                                                                  nd always here in summer when we
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                re not i
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   n the least like hi
m." "You don't underst
                                                                                                                                                                                    not like him. I know that perfectly well. Indeed, I should be sorry to look li
                                                                     and me, Harry,
                                                                                                                                  answered the artist. "Of course I am
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    u shrug your sh
oulders? I am telling yo
                                                                                                                                                                                     ectual distinction, the sort of fatality that seems to dog through history t he fal
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    f kings. It is bett
                                                                  u the truth. There i
                                                                                                                                 s a fatality about all physical and intel
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         tering steps o
er not to be different fro
spared the knowledge o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      y know nothing of victory, t
                                                                                                                                  ugly and the stupid have the best of i
                                                                 m one's fellows. The
                                                                                                                                                                                     t in this world. They can sit at their ease and gape at the play. If the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   hey are at least
                                                                 defeat. They live as
                                                                                                                                 we all should live--undisturbed, indiffer
                                                                                                                                                                                      ent, and without disquiet. They neither bring ruin upo n others, n
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       or ever receive it from alien hands. Yo ur
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   rank and wealth
Harry; my brains, such
                                                                                                                                 hatever it may be worth; Dorian Gray's g
Basil Hallward. "Yes, that is his name. I d
                                                                                                                                                                                       ood looks--we shall all suffer for what the gods hav e given us, s uffer terribly." "Dorian Gray? Is that hi
                                                                 as they are--my art, w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  s name?" asked L
                                                                ss the studio towards
                                                                                                                                                                                         idn't intend to tell it to you." "But why not?" "Oh ,I can 't expl ain. When I like people immensely, I n
ord Henry, walking acro
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 ever tell their nam
es to any one. It is like
                                                                                                                                 em. I have grown to love secrecy. It seems
                                                                                                                                                                                          to be the one thing that can make modern
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      life my sterio us or marvellous to us. The common e
                                                                surrendering a part of th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 st thing is delightfu
I if one only hides it. W
                                                                                                                                                                                           I would lose all my pleasure. It is a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               silly habit, I
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    d are say, but somehow it seems to br in
                                                                 hen I leave town now I
                                                                                                                                  ver tell my people where I am going. If I did
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               g a great deal of ro
                                                                                                                                 wfully foolish about it?" "Not at all," answer
                                                                                                                                                                                           ed Lord Henry, "not at all, my d
mance into one's life. I
                                                                  suppose you think me
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         ear Basi I. You se
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   e m to forget that I am married, and the o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               ne charm of marriag
                                                                                                                                  ly necessary for both parties. I never know w
                                                                                                                                                                                           here my wife is, and my w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   ife never knows wh at
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      am doing. When we meet--we do me et
e is that it makes a life
                                                                    of deception absolu
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                occasionally, when
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 od at it--much better, in fact, than I am. S
ly laughs at me." "I hate the way you t al
                                                                                                                                                                                                                            us faces. My wife is very go
                                                                                                      Duke
                                                                                                                                   s--we tell each other the most absurd stories
we dine out together, o
                                                                      r go down to the
                                                                                                                                                                                             with the most serio
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              he never gets confu
sed over her dates, and
                                                                                                                                  he does find me out, she makes no row at all.
                                                                                                                                                                                              I sometimes w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ish she would; but she me re
                                                                    I always do. Bu
                                                                                                    t when s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             k about your married
ife, Harry," said Basil H
                                                                                                                                  ds the door that led into the garden. "I believe
                                                                                                                                                                                                                are really a very good husband
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    but that you are thoroughly ashame d
                                                                 allward, st
                                                                                                  lling towar
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             of your own virtues. Y
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               n atural is simply a pose, and the mos t i
t ood in the shade of a tall laurel bush . T
                                                                                                                                                                                                     r cynicism is simply a pose." "Being hemselves on a long bamboo seat that s
                                                                                                                                  moral thing, and you never do a wrong thing. Y
ou are an extraordinary
                                                                fellow. Yo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            rritating pose I know,
                                                                                        u n
                                                                                                  ever say a
cried Lord Henry, laugh
                                                                                                                                  nt out into the garden together and ensconced t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            he sunlight slipped ove
                                                           ing; and the two
                                                                                                  ng men we
                                                                                         you
                                                                                                                                 mulous. After a pause, Lord Henry pulled out his
                                                                                                                                                                                                  watch. "I am afraid I must be going, Basil,"
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               he murmured, "and before I go, I insis to
r the polished leaves. In t
                                                         he grass, white d
                                                                                                  s were tre
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           n your a nswering a qu
                                                                                                                                  painter, keeping his eyes fixed on the ground. "Y told you the real reason." "No, you did not. You sa
                                                        me ago." "What is t
                                                                                                                                                                                                  ou know quite well." "I do not, Harry." "We
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              II , I will tell you what it is. I want you to y ourself in it. Now, that is childish." " H
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            explain to me why you
estion I put to you some ti
                                                                                                      " said the
                                                                                                                                                                                                    id it was because there was too much of
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          arry," said Basil Hallwar
won't exhibit Dorian Gray's
                                                        picture. I want the re
                                                                                          al r
                                                                                                     eason."
d, looking him straight in the
                                                                                                   ainted with
                                                      face, "every portrait that
                                                                                                                                  eeling is a portrait of the artist, not of the sitter. The
                                                                                                                                                                                                     sitter is merely the accident, the occas
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             io n. It is not he who is revealed by the p
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          ainter; it is rather the pai
                                                                                          is p
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            a ughed. "And what is that?" he aske d.
                                                     reveals himself. The reaso I wil I not exhibit thi
                                                                                                                                  s picture is that I am afraid that I have shown in it the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           'I will te II you," said Ḥall
nter who, on the coloured canvas
                                                                                                                                                                                                       secret of my own soul." Lord Henry I
                                                                                                                                                                                                        really very little to tell, Harry," answ
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            er ed the painter; "and I am afraid you wi
ward; but an expression of perplexity
                                                     came over his face. "I am all expectation, Basil," co
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         Il hardly understand it. Pe
                                                                                                                                  ntinued his companion, glancing at him. "Oh, there is
rhaps you will hardly believe it." Lord
                                                   Henry smiled, and leaning down, plucked a pink-pet
                                                                                                                                     led daisy from the grass and examined it. "I am quite
                                                                                                                                                                                                         sure I shall understand it," he repli
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           e d, gazing intently at the little golden
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        white-fea thered disk, "and
                                                  nything, provided that it is quite incredible." The win
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           s tars, moved to and fro in the langui d
                                                                                                                                                                                                         lilac-blooms, with their clustering
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      air. A gra sshopper began t mply this ," said the painter
as for believing things, I can believe a
                                                                                                                                  d shook some blossoms from the trees, and the heavy
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         er ed what was coming. "The story is s i t we are not savages. With an evening c
o chirrup by the wall, and like a blue thread a long thin dragon-fly floated past on its brown g
                                                                                                                                  auze wings. Lord Henry felt as if he could hear Basil Ha
                                                                                                                                                                                                          Ilward's heart beating, and wond
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      oat and a white tie, as you t
after some time. "Two months ago I went to a crush at Lady Brandon's. You know we poor
                                                                                                                                  artists have to show ourselves in society from time to ti
                                                                                                                                                                                                          me, just to remind the public tha
old me once, anybody, even a stock-broker, can gain a reputation for being civilized. Well,
                                                                                                                                  after I had been in the room about ten minutes, talking to
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           d tedious academicians, I suddenly b
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     ecame c onscious that som
                                                                                                                                                                                                           huge overdressed dowagers a
                                                                                                                                  When our eyes met, I felt that I was growing pale. A curiou
e one was looking at me. I turned half-way round and saw Dorian Gray for the first time.
                                                                                                                                                                                                            s sensation of terror cam
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           over me. I knew that I had come fac e
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     to face with some one whos
                                 so fascinating that, if I allowed it to do so, it would absorb m
                                                                                                                                  y whole nature, my whole soul, my very art itself. I did not
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        u ence in my life. You know yourself, H
e mere personality was
                                                                                                                                                                                                             want any external in
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    arry, how independent I am b
                                        been my own master; had at least always been so, till
y naturė. I have always
                                                                                                                                   I met Dorian Gray. Then--but I don't know how to explain it
                                                                                                                                                                                                              to you. Someth
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          emed to tell me that I was on the ve rg
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    e of a terrible crisis in my life.
                                                                                                                                  xquisite sorrows. I grew afraid and turned to quit the room. It re really the same things, Basil. Conscience is the trade -na
Í had a strange feeling t
                                           hat fate had i n store for me exquisite joys and
                                                                                                                                                                                                                was not
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 conscienc
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          that made me do so: it was a sort of
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   cowardice. I take no credit to
myself for trying to esc
                                                                                                                                                                                                                            f the firm. Tha
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         is all." "I don't believe that, Harry, a nd
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    I don't believe you do either.
                                                            onscience and cowardice a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                me o
                                                                                                                                  e been pride, for I used to be very proud--I certain Iy struggl
                                                                                                                                                                                                                        ed to the door. Th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  Brandon. 'You are not going to
However, whatever was
                                                              my motive--and it may hav
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     er e, of course, I stumbled against Lad y
                                                              Hallward?' she screamed o
                                                                                                                                  ut. You know her curiously shrill voice?" "
                                                                                                                                                                                         Yes; she is a pea
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     ut beauty," said Lord Henry, pulling t h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 e daisy to bits with his long nerv
run away so soon, Mr.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                   cock in everything b
ous fingers. "I could no
                                                             t get rid of her. She broug
                                                                                                                                  ht me up to royalties, and people wit h stars and garters, and
                                                                                                                                                                                                                     elderly ladies with
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       gantic tiaras and parrot noses. She s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 poke of me as her dearest friend
                                                                                                                                  o her head to lionize me. I believ
. I had only met her onc
                                                            e before, but she took it int
                                                                                                                                                                                      e some picture of min
                                                                                                                                                                                                                     e had made a grea
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       success at the time, at least had be en
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 chattered about in the penny ne
wspapers, which is the
                                                           nineteenth-century standard
                                                                                                                                    of immortality. Suddenly I found
                                                                                                                                                                                                            mys
                                                                                                                                                                                                                      elf face to face w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      h the young man whose personality h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               ad so strangely stirred me. We w
ere quite close, almost
We would have spoken
                                                                                                                                   . It was reckless of me, but I asked Lady Brandon
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  o him. Perhaps it was not so reckless
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              after all. It was simply inevitable.
                                                           touching. Our eyes met again
                                                                                                                                                                                                                        introduce me t
                                                           to each other without any intr
                                                                                                                                  oduction. I am sure of that. Dorian told me so afterwards. He, too,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              how did Lady Brandon describe th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                        felt that we we
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     destined to know each other." "An d
                                                                                                                                  ow she goes in for giving a rapid p recis of all her guests. I rememb
                                                                                                                                                                                                                        er her bringin
is wonderful young ma
                                                         n?" asked his companion. "I kn
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 g me up to a truculent and red-faced ol
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             d gentlem an covered all over with
                                                                                                                                  whisper which must have been per fectly audible to everybody in the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    ost astounding details. I simply fle d.
orders and ribbons, an
                                                        d hissing into my ear, in a tragic
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             I like to f ind out people for mysel
                                                                                                                                                                                                                          room, the
                                                        ats her guests exactly as an auctio
                                                                                                                                  neer treats his goods. She either e xplains them entirely away, or tell
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                yt hing about them except what one wan
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ts to know ." "Poor Lady Brandon!
f. But Lady Brandon tre
                                                                                                                                                                                                                           s one ever
                                                       rry!" said Hallward listlessly. "My d
                                                                                                                                  ear fellow, she tried to found a salo n, and only succeeded in opening
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   nt. How could I admire her? But tel I
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           me, what di d she say about Mr. Dor
You are hard on her, Ha
                                                      ing like, 'Charming boy--poor dear m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 do anything--oh, yes, plays the pia n st ending for one," said the young I or
ian Gray?" "Oh, someth
                                                                                                                                  other and I absolutely inseparable. Quite forget what he does--afraid he
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           o--or is it the violin, dear Mr. Gray?
Neither of us could help
                                                      laughing, and we became friends at o
                                                                                                                                  nce." "Laughter is not at all a bad beginning for a friendship, and it is fa
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          d, plucking a nother daisy. Hallward
                                                                                                                                  ," he murmured—"or what enmity i s, for that matter. You like every one; ds that, like ravelled skeins of glos sy white silk, were drifting across the oks, my acquain ances for their go od characters, and my enemies for their
                                                    on't understand what friendship is, Harry
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 to say, you are indifferent to every o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         ne." "How hor ribly unjust of you!" cri
shook his head. "You d
                                                  s hat back and looking up at the little clou
people. I choose my friends for their good lo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                wed turquoise of the summer sky.
ed Lord Henry, tilting hi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                holl
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         es; horribly unjust of you. I make a gr
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               od intellects. A man cannot be too ca is rather vain." "I should think it w as I suppose?" "Oh, brothers! I d on But I can't help detecting my
eat difference between
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        reful in the choi ce of his enemies. I ha
                                                                                                                                  er, and consequently they all appreciate me. Is that very vain of me? I think i more than an acquaintance." "And much less than a friend. A sort of brother Harry!" exclaimed Hallward, frowning. "My dear fellow, I am not quite serious ourselves. I quite sympathize with the rage of the English democracy a grant structure.
                                               fool. They are all men of some intellectual pow
cquaintance." "My dear old Basil, you are much
ve not got one who is a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         Harry. But acco rding to your categor
y I must be merely an a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        't care for brothers. My elder brother w
                                               er brothers seem never to do anything
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           I can't help detesting m y
on't die, and my young
                                                                                                                                                                                                                 not quite seri ou s.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       relations. I suppos e it comes from the f
                                                                                                                                                                                                             sh democracy a gainst
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 t they call the vice s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      of the upper orders . The masses feel th
act that none of us can
                                             stand other people having the same fau
                                                                                                   Its a
                                              ty, and immorality should be their own
                                                                                                                                   cial property, and that if any one of us makes an ass
                                                                                                                                                                                                       of himself, he is po
at live correctly." "I don't
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             chin
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      serves. When poor Southwark got into t
at drunkenness, stupid
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       g on their pr e
                                                                                                  spe
                                               ndignation was quite magnificent. An ure y ou don't either." Lord Hen
                                                                                                                                   et I don't suppose that ten per cent of the proletari
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     single word that you have said, and, wha
he divorce court, their i
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    agre
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              e with a
t is more, Harry, I feel s
                                                                                                                                   ry stroked his pointed brown bear d and tapped
                                                                                                                                                                                                     the toe of his patent-leather bo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         ot w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    h a tassel led ebony cane. "How English
you are Basil! That is th
                                                                                                                                   ade that observation. If one puts fo rward an ide
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     thing to do--he neve r dreams of consider
                                                              e second time you have m
                                                                                                                                                                                                   a to a true Eng
                                                                                                                                                                                                                         lishman--always a r
                                                                                                                                                                                                er one believ es it oneselt. Now, the value ere the man is, the more purely intellectual will the pe
                                                             right or wrong. The only t
an who expresses it. Inde
ing whether the idea is
                                                                                                                                   hing he considers of any importance is wheth
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   f an idea has nothing whatsoever to do wi
                                                                                                                                   ed, the probabilities are that the more insinc
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            he idea be, as in that case it will not be coloure
th the sincerity of the m
                                                                                                                                                                                               ere the man
                                                                                                                                                                                              itics, sociol ogy, or metaphysics with you. I like person s be do you see him?" "Every day. I couldn't be happy i f I did rart." "H e is all my art to me now," said the painter gravely. "I so m etimes
                                                              is desires, or his prejudi
d by either his wants, h
                                                                                                                                   ces. However, I don't propose to di scuss pol
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  tter than principles, and I like persons wit
                                                                                                                                   orld. Tell me more about Mr. Doria n Gray.
h no principles better th
                                                              an anything else in the w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 n't see him every day. He is abs olutely n
                                                              extraordinary! I thought
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                think, Harry, that there are only tw
ecessary to me." "How
                                                                                                                                    you would never care for anythin g but yo
                                                                                                                                                                                                          the second is the appearance of a new personality for art also
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               What the invention of oil-painting was
                                                              e world's history. The fi
of any importance in th
                                                                                                                                    rst is the appearance of a new me dium fo
the Venetians, the face
                                                               of Antinous was to lat
                                                                                                                                   e Greek sculpture, and the face of Dorian
                                                                                                                                                                                            Gray w ill some day be to me. It is not merely th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       pai
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              nt from him, draw from him, sk etch f
                                                                                                                                                                                           sitter. I won't tell you that I am dissatisfied with what I have done of him, or that his beauty is such that art cann ot exp
rom him. Of course, I h
                                                                                                                                   e is much more to me than a mode I or a
                                                              ave done all that. But h
                                                                                                                                                                                                     I met Dorian Gray, is good work, is the best work of my life. But in some curious way--I wonder will you
ress it. There is nothing
                                                              that art cannot expres
                                                                                                                                   s, and I know that the work I have done,
                                                                                                                                                                                                    rely new mode of style. I see things differently, I think of them differently. I can now recreate life in a way that w
understand me?--his pe
                                                             rsonality has suggeste
                                                                                                                                   d to me an entirely new manner in  art. a
as hidden from me befo
                                                            re. 'A dream of form in
                                                                                                                                   days of thought'--who is it who says that
                                                                                                                                                                                            ? If orget; but it is what Dorian Gray has been to me. The merely visible presence of this lad--for he seems to me little mo
                                                                                                                                   is merely visible presence--ah! I w onde
                                                                                                                                                                                            r c an you re alize all that that means? Unconsciously he defines for me the lines of a fres h school, a school that is to have
re than a lad, though he
                                                            is really over t wenty--h
n it all the passion of th
                                                           e romantic spiri t, all the
                                                                                                                                    perfection of the spirit that is Gre ek.
                                                                                                                                                                                                           ny of soul and body--how much that is! We in our madness h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 ave s eparated the two, and have invented
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    gnew offered me such a huge price but wh
a realism that is vulgar,
                                                            an ideality tha t is void
                                                                                                                                     Harry! if you only knew what Dor ian
                                                                                                                                                                                                Gray is to me! You remember that landscape of mine, for whi
                                                           h? It is one of the best
                                                                                                                                                                                               so? Beca use, while I was painting it, Dorian Gray sat beside ays looke d for and always missed." "Basil, this is extraordinar
ich I would not part wit
                                                                                                                                   things I have ever done. And why is it
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   ome subtle influence passed from him to
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    me. S
                                                           e in my life I saw in the
                                                                                                                                    plain woodland the wonder I had alw
me, and for the first tim
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 st see Dorian Gray." Hallward got up from th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    y! I mu
e seat and walked up a
                                                           nd down the g arden. A
                                                                                                                                    fter some time he came back. "Har ry,'
                                                                                                                                                                                                            "Dorian Gray is to me simply a motive in art. You mi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 nothing in him. I see everything in him. He is
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ght see
                                                           my work than when no s all." "Then why won
                                                                                                                                                                                                          have said, of a new manner. I find him in the cur ves o
never more present in
                                                                                                                                    image of him is there. He is a sug ges
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               certain lines, in the loveliness and subtleties o
                                                                                                                                                                                                on, as I
f certain colours. That i
                                                                                                                                    't you exhibit his portrait?" asked Lor
                                                                                                                                                                                                          Because, without intending it, I have put into it so ome e
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              xpression of all this curious artistic idolatry, of
which, of course, I have
                                                            never cared to spea
                                                                                                                                   k to him. He knows nothing about it. H
                                                                                                                                                                                             shall ne ver know anything about it. But the world might
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              it, and I will not bare my soul to their shallow p
                                                                                                                                                                                            myself in the thing, Harry--too much of myself!" "Poets ar e
"I hate them for it," cried Hallward. "An artist should creat
                                                                                                                                    their microscope. There is too much o
ying eyes. My heart sha
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             not so scrupulous as you are. They know how u
                                                            Il never be put under
seful passion is for pub
                                                            lication. Now adays a
                                                                                                                                  broken heart will run to many editions.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             e beautiful things, but should put nothing of his
                                                                                                                       en treat art as if it were meant to be a form of au
                                                                                                                                                                                            tobiogra phy. We have lost the abstract sense of beau ty. So
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            me day I will show the world what it is; and for th
own life into them. We I
                                                            ive in an age when m
                                                            Il never see my po
at reason the world sha
                                                                                                              rait of Dorian
                                                                                                                                          Gray." "I think you are wrong, Ba
                                                                                                                                                                                           sil, but I won't argue with you. It is only the intellectuall y
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ost who ever argue. Tell me, is Dorian Gray very
ond of you?" The paint
                                                                                                                                             or a few moments. "He likes m
                                                                                                                                                                                                     nswered after a pause; "I know he likes me. Of co
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            urse I flatter him dreadfully. I find a strange plea
                                                            er consider
                                                                                     ed f
sure in saying things to
                                                                                    now I shall be
                                                                                                                                                sorry for having said. As a
                                                                                                                                                                                           rule, he is charming to me, and we sit in the studio a nd tal
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            k of a thousand things. Now and then, however,
                                                              him that I k
                                                                                                                                                                                           n. The n feel, Harry, that I have given away my whol e soul ummer's day." "Days in summer, Basil, are apt to ling er,"
he is horribly thoughtl
                                                                   ss, and se ems to take a real
                                                                                                                                                     delight in giving me pai
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            to some one who treats it as if it were a flower
                                                                                                                                                         ity, an ornament for a s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           murmured Lord Henry. "Perhaps you will tire so
to put in his coat, a bit
                                                                      decoration to charm his van
oner than he will. It is a
                                                                        ad
                                                                               thing to think of,
                                                                                                                                                            but there is no doubt that genius lasts longer than beauty. That accounts for the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            fact that we all take such pains to over-educ ate
                                                         or existen ce
ourselves. In the wild s
                                                                               we want to have
                                                                                                                                                                 something that endures, and so we fill our minds with rubbish and facts, in th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           e silly hope of keeping our place. The thoro ugh
                                     tr uggle f
ly well-informed man--that is the mo
                                                                                     e mind of the thor
                                                                                                                                                                    oughly well-infor med man is a dreadful thing. It is like a bric-a-brac shop, al
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           I monsters and dust, with everything price dab
                                                        dern ideal. An d th
ove its proper value. I think y
                                                       ou will tire fir st, all th
                                                                                       e same. Some da
                                                                                                                                                                        y you will look at your friend, and he will seem to you to be a little out of
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            drawing, or you won't like his tone of col our, o
r something. You will bitte
                                                                                           your own heart, a
                                                                                                                                                                             seriously think that he has behaved very badly to you. The next
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            time he calls, you will be perfectly cold a nd indi
                                                           rly reproach him in
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           the worst of having a romance of any ki nd is th t feel what I feel. You change too often. ""Ah, m
                                                                                                                                                                         told me is quite a romance, a romance of art one might call it, and
fferent. It will be a great pity
                                                                 , for it will alter
                                                                                                you. What you
                                                                                                                                                               have
                                                                    c." "Harry, don
at it leaves one so unromanti
                                                                                                  't talk like that. As
                                                                                                                                                                           as I live, the personality of Dorian Gray will dom inate me. You can
y dear Basil, that is exactly wh
                                                                      y I can feel it.
                                                                                                   Those who are f
                                                                                                                                                                             know only the trivial side of love: it is the fait hless who kn ow lov
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            e's tragedies." And Lord Henry struck a light on
                                                                                                                                                                     ous and satisfied air, as if he had summed up the world in a phr a
ed themselves across the grass like swallows. How pleasant it wa
a dainty silver case and began to
                                                                           smoke a cig
                                                                                                     arette with a self
                                                                                                                                                              nscious
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             There was a rustle of chirruping spa rrows in th
e green lacquer leaves of the ivy,
                                                                           and the blue
                                                                                                      cloud-shadows
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            s in the garden! And how delightful other people
                                                                                                                                                      chas
e's emotions were!--much more deli
                                                                            ghtful than their
                                                                                                            ideas, it seemed
                                                                                                                                                        to him.
                                                                                                                                                                     One's own soul, and the passions of one's frien ds-those were the f
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ascinating things in life. He picture d to himself
with silent amusement the tedious lu
                                                                                                           had missed by sta
                                                                                                                                                      ying so long with Basil Hallward. Had he gone to his aunt
                                                                                                                                                                                                                               's, he would have been
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             sure to have met Lord Goodbody there, and the
                                                                              ncheon that he
                                                                                                                                                                 d the necessity for model lodgi ng-houses. Each class wou have spoken on the value of thrift, and the idle grown eloquent over the
e whole conversation would have been
                                                                                 about the fee
                                                                                                           ding of the poor an
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             Id have preached the importance of those virtu
                                                                                                             wn lives. The rich woul
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             dignity of labour. It was charmin g to have esca
es, for whose exercise there was no nec
                                                                                 essity in their o
ped all that! As he thought of his aunt, an
                                                                                                              strike him. He turned to
                                                                                                                                                          Hallward and said, "My dear fellow, have just remembered." "Remember ed what,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             Harry?" "Where I heard the nam e of Dorian Gray
                                                                                 idea seemed to
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              young man who was going to help her in the É
, good women ha ve not. S he said that he wa
." "Where was it?" asked Hallward, with a sl
                                                                                    ight frown. "Do
                                                                                                                    n't look so angry
                                                                                                                                                          , Basil. It w
                                                                                                                                                                          as at my aunt, Lady Agatha's. She told me she had discovered a wonderful
ast End, and that his name was Dorian Gray.
                                                                                       am bound to sta
                                                                                                                    te that she never told
                                                                                                                                                                              e he was good-looking. Women have no appreciation of good looks; at least
s very earnest and had a beautiful nature. I at o
y glad you didn't, Harry." "Why?" "I don't want y
ord Henry, laughing. The painter turned to his serv
enry. "Dorian Gray is my dearest friend," he said. "H
                                                                                       nce pictured to m ou to meet him."
                                                                                                                  yself a creature with spe
                                                                                                                                                                            ctacles and lank hair, horribly freckled, and tramping about on huge feet. I wish I h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              n it was you r friend." "I am ver
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              ad know
                                                                                                                                                                                           "Mr. Dorian Gray is in the studio, s ir," said the butler, coming into the gard en. " You must introdu ce me now," cried Lay to wait, Parker: I shall be in in a few moments." The man bowed and went up the walk. Then he looked at Lord H
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         You must introdu ce me now," cried l
                                                                                                                    ou don't want me to meet
                                                                                                                                                                    him?" "No.
                                                                                             ant, who stood b
                                                                                                                         linking in the sunlight. "A
                                                                                                                                                                     sk Mr. Gr
                                                                                                                                                                                         ay to
                                                                                              e has a simple and
                                                                                                                            a beautiful nature. Your
                                                                                                                                                                          aunt
                                                                                                                                                                                       was q
                                                                                                                                                                                                      uite r
                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ight
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                in what she said of him. Don't spoil him. Don't try to influence him. Your i nfluence would be ba

 d. The world is wide, and has many marvellous peopl

                                                                                               e in it. Don't take awa y from me the one perso
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                whate ver charm it possesses: my life as an artist depends on him. Mind, Harry, I trust you." He sp
                                                                                                                                                                                  who gives
                                                                                                                                                                                                      to m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                  y art
                                                                                                                                                                                                   enry, sm
of S
oke very slowly, and the words seemed wrung out of hi
                                                                                                 m almost against his will. "What nonsense you
                                                                                                                                                                  talk!" said
                                                                                                                                                                                                                 iling, a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    ng Hallward by the arm, he almost led him into the house. CHAP TER 2 As they
                                                                                                                                                                                      Lord H
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                nd tak
entered they saw Dorian Gray. He was seated at the pian
m. They are perfectly charming." "That entirely depends o
music-stool in a wilful, petulant manner. When he caught sig
                                                                                                  o, with his back to the em, turning over the page s of a volun how you sit to-day, Dorian." "Oh, I am tired of sitting, and I d
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      orest Scenes." "You must lend me these, Basil," he cried. "I want to learn the a life-sized portrait of myself," answered the lad, swinging round on the ent, and he started up. "I beg your pardon, Basil, but I didn't know y
                                                                                                                                                                                                                 chuman
                                                                                                                                                                                          me
                                                                                                                                                                                                      on 't
                                                                                                                                                                                                                 w an t
                                                                                                        ht of Lord Henry, a faint blush coloured his cheeks for a mom
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   t a capital sitter you were, and now you have spoiled everything."
ou had any one with you." "This is Lord Henry Wotton, Dorian
You have not spoiled my pleasure in meeting you, Mr. Gray," sa
tes, and, I am afraid, one of her victims also." "I am in Lady Agat
                                                                                                          , an old Oxford friend of mine. I have just been telling him wha
                                                                                                           id Lord Henry, stepping forward and extending his hand. "My ha's black books at present," answered Dorian with a funny
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       aunt has often spoken to me about you. You are one of her favouri
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            look of penitence. "I promised to go to a club in Whitechapel w
what she will say to me. I am far too frightened to call." "Oh
ith her last Tuesday, and I really forgot all about it. We were to hav
                                                                                                                e played a duet together--three duets, I believe. I don't know
, I will make your peace with my aunt. She is quite devoted to you. A
                                                                                                                 nd I don't think it really matters about your not being there.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   The audience probably thought it was a duet. When Aunt
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      me," answered Dorian, laughing. Lord Henry looked at was something in his face that made one trust hi
Agatha sits down to the piano, she makes quite enough noise for two
                                                                                                                       people." "That is very horrid to her, and not very nice to
him. Yes, he was certainly wonderfully handsome, with his finely curve
                                                                                                                       scarlet lips, his frank blue eyes, his crisp gold hair. There
m at once. All the candour of youth was there, as well as all youth's pass
                                                                                                               ion ate purity. One felt that he had kept himself unspotted from t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              he world. No wonder Basil Hallward worshippe
d him. "You are too charming to go in for philanthropy, Mr. Gray--far too ch
                                                                                                              armi ng." And Lord Henry flung himself down on the divan and opene
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   d his cigarette-case. The painter had been b
usy mixing his colours and getting his brushes ready. He was looking worri
                                                                                                            ed, and when he heard Lord Henry's last remark, he glanced at him, hesit
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ated for a moment, and then said, "Harry
, I want to finish this picture to-day. Would you think it awfully rude of me if I a
ase don't, Lord Henry. I see that Basil is in one of his sulky moods, and I can't b
                                                                                                            sked you to go away?" Lord Henry smiled and looked at Dorian Gray. "Am
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           I to go, Mr. Gray?" he asked. "Oh, ple
                                                                                                           ear him when he sulks. Besides, I want you to tell me why I should not go
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              in for philanthropy." "I don't know
that I shall tell you that, Mr. Gray. It is so tedious a subject that one would have t
                                                                                                            o talk seriously about it. But I certainly shall not run away, now that you have
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    asked me to stop. You don't r
eally mind, Basil, do you? You have often told me that you liked your sitters to hav
                                                                                                                e some one to chat to." Hallward bit his lip. "If Dorian wishes it, of course yo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      u must stay. Dorian's whim
s are laws to everybody, except himself." Lord Henry took up his hat and gloves. "Yo
                                                                                                                  u are very pressing, Basil, but I am afraid I must go. I have promised to me
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          et a man at the Orleans.
Good-bye, Mr. Gray. Come and see me some afternoon in Curzon Street. I am nearly a
                                                                                                                    lways at home at five o'clock. Write to me when you are coming. I should
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         b es
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             orry to miss you." "B
asil," cried Dorian Gray, "if Lord Henry Wotton goes, I shall go, too. You never open you
o stay. I insist upon it." "Stay, Harry, to oblige Dorian, and to oblige me," said Hallward, g
e dreadfully tedious for my unfortunate sitters. I beg you to stay." "But what about my man
                                                                                                                       r lips while you are painting, and it is horribly dull standing on a platfo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     rm and trying to look p
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  leasant. Ásk him
                                                                                                                             azing intently at his picture. "It is quite true, I never talk when I am wor at the Orleans?" The painter laughed. "I don't think there will be any
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   king, and never listen either
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      , and it must b
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          in, Harry. A
myself."
htful
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 difficulty about that. Sit down aga
                                                                                                                                       to what Lord Henry says. He has a very bad influence over all hi
nd now, Dorian, get up on the platform, and don't move about too much, or pay any attention
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 s friends, with the single exception of
                                                                                                                                        ue of discontent to Lord Henry, to whom he had rather taken a fancy . He was so unlike Basil. They made a delig lly a very bad influence, Lord Henry? As bad as Basil says?" "There is no such thing as a good influence, Mr. Gray. All
Dorian Gray stepped up on the dais with the air of a young Greek martyr, and made a little mo
contrast. And he had such a beautiful voice. After a few moments he said to him, "Have you rea
nfluence is immoral--immoral from the scientific point of view." "Why?" "Because to influence a p
                                                                                                                                                 erson is to give him one's own soul. He does not think his natural thoughts, or burn with his natural passions. His vir
are not real to him. His sins, if there are such things as sins, are borrowed. He becomes an echo o
                                                                                                                                                 f some one else's music, an actor of a part that has not been written for him. The aim of life is self-development. To reali ze on
e's nature perfectly--that is what each of us is here for. People are afraid of themselves, nowadays. T
                                                                                                                                                  hey have forgotten the highest of all duties, the duty that one owes to one's self. Of course, they are charitable. They feed the
                                                                                                                                                           race. Perhaps we never really had it. The terror of society, which is the basis of morals, the terror of God, which is the to the right, Dorian, like a good boy," said the painter, deep in his work and conscious only that a look had come into oice, and with that graceful wave of the hand that was always so characteristic of him, and that he had even in his Eto eling, expression to every thought, reality to every dream--I believe that the world would gain such a fresh impulse o
hungry and clothe the beggar. But their own souls starve, and are naked. Courage has gone out of our
e secret of religion--these are the two things that govern us. And yet--" "Just turn your head a little mor the lad's face that he had never seen there before. "And yet," continued Lord Henry, in his low, musical v
n days, "I believe that if one man were to live out his life fully and completely, were to give form to every fe
f joy that we would forget all the maladies of mediaevalism, and return to the Hellenic ideal--to something fin
                                                                                                                                                                  er, richer than the Hellenic ideal, it may be. But the bravest man amongst us is afraid of himself. The mutilation of t
                                                                                                                                                         impulse that we strive to strangle broods in the mind and poisons us. The by of a regret. The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it. Resist it, and you
he savage has its tragic survival in the self-denial that mars our lives. We are punished for our refusals. Every
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ody sins once, and has done with
its sin, for action is a mode of purification. Nothing remains then but the recollection of a pleasure, or the luxur
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 r soul grows sick with longing
for the things it has forbidden to itself, with desire for what its monstrous laws have made monstrous and unlawf
                                                                                                                                                     ul. It has been said that the great events of the world take place in the brain. It is in the br
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               ain, and the brain only, that the gr
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