

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 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 seeing his own face in a glass. The nineteenth century s 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 sympathies. An 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 point of view of form, 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 at once surface and symbol. Those w ce do so at their peril. Those who read the symbol do so at their peril. It is the spectator, and not life, that art really mirrors. Diversity of opinion about a work of art shows that the work is new, complex, and vital. When cri is in accord with himself. We can forgive a man for making a useful thing as long as he does not admire it. The only excuse for making a useless thing is that one admires it intensely. 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, Lord Henry Wotton could just catch the gleam of the honey-sweet ssoms of a laburnum, whose tremulous branches seemed hardly able to bear the burden of a beauty so flamelike as theirs; and now and then the fantastic shadows of birds in flight flitted across th ains that were stretched in front of the huge window, producing a kind of momentary Japanese effect, and making him think of those pallid , jade-faced painters of Tokyo who, through the me cessarily immobile, seek to convey the sense of swiftness and motion. The sullen murmur of the bees shoudering their way thr ough the long unknown grass, or circling with mo ound was like the bourdon note of a distant orga uty, and in front of it, some little distance away, citement and gave rise to so many strange conj d across his face, and seemed about to linger i his brain some curious dream from which he f ainly send it next year to the Grosvenor. The e that I have not been able to see the pictures, which was dreadful, or k I shall send it anywhere," he answered, to elevated his eyebrows and looked at him n Not send it anywhere? My dear fellow, wh ne, you seem to want to throw it away. I is would set you far above all the young id, "but I really can't exhibit it. I have ll the same." "Too much of yourself in e and your coal-black hair, and this y u have an intellectual expression an harmony of any face." The momey, h ow per fe ctly hideous they y w hen he was a boy t old me, but whose pic inter when we n the least like h u shrug your sh f kings. It is bett hey are at least rank and wealth, s name?" asked L ever tell their nam st thing is delightfu g a great deal of ro ne charm of marriag occasionally, when he never gets confu k about your married l of your own virtues. Y rritating pose I know," he sunlight slipped over n your a swering a qu explain to me why you t array," said Basil Hallw ainter; it is rather the pai "I will te ll you," said Hallw ll hardly understand it. "And white-fea thered disk," pend air. A grasshopper began t mply this," said the painter's oat and a white tie, as you t became c onscious that som to face w ith some one who arry, how independent I am b e of a terrible crisis in my life. cowardice. I take no credit to I don't believe you do either. Brandon. 'You are not going to e daisy to bits with his long nerv poke of me as her dearest friend chattered about in the penny ne ad so strangely stirred me. We w after all. It was simply inevitable, how did Lady Brandon describe th d gentlem an covered all over with I like to f ind out people for mysel ts to know.'" "Poor Lady Brandon! me, what di d she say about Mr. Dor o-or is it the violin, dear Mr. Gray? d, plucking a nother daisy. Hallward ne." "How hor ribly unjust of you!" cri es; horribly unjust of you. I make a gr eful in the choi ce of his enemies. I ha , Harry. But acco rding to your categor care for brothers. My elder brother w relations. I suppose e it comes from the f of the upper orders." The masses feel th serves. When poor Southwark got into a single word that you have said, and, wha h a tasselled ebony cane. "How English thing to do--he neve r dreams of consider f an idea has nothing whatsoever to do wi he idea be, as in that case it will not be coloure s be tter than principles," and I like persons wit n't see him every day. He is abs olutely n think, Harry, that there are only tw o eras What the invention of oil-painting was nt from him, draw from him, sk etch f to

him that I k now I shall be e ss, and se ems to take a real of decoration to charm his van s ad thing to think of, or existen ce, we want to have dern ideal. And th e mind of the thor ou will tire fir st, all th e same. Some da rly reproach him in your own heart, a , for it will alter your. What you c." "Harry, don t talk like that. As Those who are a smoke a cig arette with a self and the blue cloud-shadows ghful than their ideas, it seemed ncheon that he had missed by sta about the fee ding of the poor an erness in their o wn lives. The rich woul idea seemed to strike him. He turned to ight frown. "Do n't look so angry ame bound to sta te that she never tol nce pictured to m yself a creature with spe ou to meet him." "Y ou don't want me to meet him?" "No." "Mr. Dorian Gray is in the studio, s ir," said the butler, coming into the gard sk Mr. Gr. ay to wait, Parker: I shall be in a few moments." The man bowed and went up the walk. Then he looked at Lord H e has a simple and a beautiful nature. You n aunt was q uite r ight in wh at she said of him. Don't spoil him. Don't try to influence him. Your i nfluence would be ba e in it. Don't take awa y from me the one per n who gives whate ver charm it possesses: my life as an artist depends on him. Mind, Harry, I trust you." He sp n almost against his will. "What nonsense you talk!" said Lord H enry, sm iling, a nd taki ng Hallward by the arm, he almost led him into the house. CHAP TER 2 As they 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 a capital sitter you were, and now you have spoiled everything." " y 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 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 he world. No wonder Basil Hallward worships d his cigarette-case. The painter had been b ated for a moment, and then said, "Harry I to go, Mr. Gray?" he asked. "Oh, ple in for philanthropy." "I don't know asked me to stop. You don't r u must stay. Dorian's whim et a man at the Orleans. orry to miss you." "B leasant. Ask him t , and it must b in, Harry. A myself. i

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I turned half-way round and saw Dorian Gray for the first time. so fascinating that, if I allowed it to do so, it would absorb m been my own master; had at least always been so, till hat fate had i n store for me exquisite joys and e ape." "C onscience and cowardice a my motive--and it may hav Hallward?" she screamed o t get rid of her. She broug e before, but she took it int nineteenth-century standard touching. Our eyes met again to each other without any intr n?" asked his companion. "I kn d hissing into my ear, in a tragic ats her guests exactly as an aucto rry!" said Hallward listlessly. "My d ing like, 'Charming boy--poor dear m laughing, and we became friends at o on't understand what friendship is, Harry s hat back and looking up at the little clou people. I choose my friends for their good lo fool. They are all men of some intellectual pow acquaintance." "My dear old Basil, you are much er brothers seem never to do anything else." " stand other people having the same fau ts a nd, and immorality should be their own ndignation was quite magnificent. An ou don't either." Lord Hen e second time you have m right or wrong. The only t an who expresses it. Inde is desires, or his prejudi an anything else in the w extraordinary! I thought e world's history. The fi of Antinous was to lat ave done all that. But h that art cannot expres rsonality has suggeste re. 'A dream of form in is really over t twenty--h e romantic spiri t, all the an ideal that is void h? It is one of t he best e in my life I saw in the nd down the g garden. A my work than when o s all." "Then why won never cared to spea ll never be put under lication. Now adays a ive in an age when m ll never see my po rt en treat art as if it were meant to be a form of au Gray." "I think you are wrong, Ba or a few moments. "He likes m delight in giving me pai ty, an ornament for a s but there is no doubt th t something that endures, and so we fill our minds with rubbish and facts, in th oughly well-infor med man is a dreadful thing. It is like a bric-a-brac sh op, al y you will look at your friend, and he will seem to you to be a little out nd seriously think that he has behaved very badly t o you. The next have told me is quite a romance, a romance of art one might call it, and long as I live e, the personality of Dorian Gray will dom inate me. You can a tiful know only the trivial side of love: it is the fait hless who kn ow lov -co nscious and satisfied air, as if he had summed up the world in a phr ase. chas ed themselves across the grass like swallows. H ow pleasant it wa to him. One's own soul, and the passions of one's frien ds--those were the f ying so long with Basil Hallward. Had he gone to his aunt 's, he would have been d the necessity for model lodgi ng-houses. Each cla ss wou d have spoken on the value of thrift, and the lile grown eloquent over the Hallward and said, "My dear fellow, I have just remembered." "Remember ed what, , Basil. It w as at my aunt, Lady Agatha's. She told me she had discovered a wonderful m e he was good-looking. Women have no appreciation of good looks; at least I h ctacles and lank hair, horribly freckled, and tramping about on huge feet. I wish I h him?" "No." "Mr. Dorian Gray is in the studio, s ir," said the butler, coming into the gard sk Mr. Gr. ay to wait, Parker: I shall be in a few moments." The man bowed and went up the walk. Then he looked at Lord H e has a simple and a beautiful nature. You n aunt was q uite r ight in wh at she said of him. Don't spoil him. Don't try to influence him. Your i nfluence would be ba e in it. Don't take awa y from me the one per n who gives whate ver charm it possesses: my life as an artist depends on him. Mind, Harry, I trust you." He sp n almost against his will. 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