

КАРМАННОЕ ЧТЕНИЕ НА АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ



UPPER-INTERMEDIATE

Oscar Wilde

THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY



Оскар Уайльд

ПОРТРЕТ ДОРИАНА ГРЕЯ

Карманное чтение на английском языке

Оскар Уайльд

**Портрет Дориана Грея /
The Picture of Dorian Gray**

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Оскар Уайльд / Oscar Wilde

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Иллюстрации М. М. Салтыкова

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Chapter 1

The studio was filled with the rich smell of roses. Lord Henry Wotton¹ was sitting on the divan and smoking innumerable cigarettes. Through the open door came the distant sounds of the London streets.

In the centre of the room stood the full-length portrait² of a young man of extraordinary personal beauty, and in front of it, some little distance away³, was sitting the artist himself, Basil Hallward⁴.

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

"It is your best work, Basil, the best thing you have ever done," said Lord Henry. "You must certainly send it next year to the Grosvenor⁵. The Academy is too large and too vulgar.

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

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

Lord Henry elevated his eyebrows and looked at him in amazement through the thin blue wreaths of smoke⁶. "Not send it anywhere? My dear fellow, why? What odd people you painters are! A portrait like this would set you far above all the young men in England⁷."

"I know you will laugh at me," Basil replied, "but I really can't exhibit it. I have put too much of myself into it⁸."

Lord Henry stretched himself out on the divan and laughed. "Too much of yourself in it! Upon my word, Basil, this man is truly beautiful. Don't flatter yourself, Basil: you are not in the least like him⁹."

"You don't understand me, Harry," answered the artist. "I know that perfectly well. Indeed, I should be sorry to look like him. I am telling you the truth. It is better not to be different from other people. The stupid and ugly have the best of this world. Dorian Gray¹⁰—"

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

"Yes, that is his name. I didn't intend to tell it to you."

"But why not?"

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

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

¹ Lord Henry Wotton – лорд Генри Уоттон

² full-length portrait – портрет в полный рост

³ some little distance away – на небольшом расстоянии

⁴ Basil Hallward – Бэзил Холлуорд

⁵ Grosvenor – Гросвенор

⁶ wreaths of smoke – кольца дыма

⁷ A portrait like this would set you far above all the young men in England. – Этот портрет вознёс бы тебя много выше всех молодых художников Англии.

⁸ I have put too much of myself into it. – Я вложил в него слишком много самого себя.

⁹ you are not in the least like him – ты ничуть на него не похож

¹⁰ Dorian Gray – Дориан Грей

"I hate the way you talk about your married life, Harry," said Basil Hallward, walking towards the door that led into the garden. "I believe you are really a very good husband, but that you are ashamed of it. You are an extraordinary fellow. You never say a good thing, and you never do a wrong thing. Your cynicism is simply a pose."

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

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

"I told you the real reason."

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

"Harry," said Basil Hallward, looking him straight in the face, "every portrait that is painted with feeling is a portrait of the artist, not the sitter. The reason I will not exhibit this picture is that I am afraid that I have shown in it the secret of my own soul."

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

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

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

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

"What did you do?"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Every day. I couldn't be happy if I didn't see him every day."

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

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

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

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

"Then why won't you exhibit his portrait?" asked Lord Henry.

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Remembered what, Harry?"

"Where I heard the name of Dorian Gray."

"Where was it?" asked Hallward with a slight frown.

"Don't look so angry, Basil. It was at my aunt's, Lady Agatha's. She told me that she had discovered this wonderful young man. He was going to help her work with the poor people in the East End of London, and his name was Dorian Gray. Of course I didn't know it was your friend."

"I am very glad you didn't, Harry."

"Why?"

"I don't want you to meet him."

"Mr. Dorian Gray is in the studio, sir," said the butler, coming into the garden.

"You must introduce me now," cried Lord Henry, laughing.

The painter turned to his servant. "Ask Mr. Gray to wait, Parker. I will come in in a few moments."

Then he looked at Lord Henry. "Dorian Gray is my dearest friend," he said. "He has a simple and a beautiful nature. Don't spoil him. Don't try to influence him. Your influence would be bad. Don't take away from me the one person who makes me a true artist. Mind, Harry, I trust you."

"What nonsense you talk!" said Lord Henry, smiling, and taking Hallward by the arm, he almost led him into the house.

Chapter 2

As they entered they saw Dorian Gray. He was sitting at the piano, with his back to them, and he was turning the pages of some music by Schumann. "You must lend me these, Basil," he cried. "I want to learn them. They are perfectly charming."

"That entirely depends on how you sit today¹¹, Dorian."

"Oh, I am bored with sitting, and I don't want a portrait of myself," answered the boy, turning quickly. When he caught sight of Lord Henry, his face went red for a moment. "I am sorry, Basil, I didn't know that you had anyone with you."

"This is Lord Henry Wotton, Dorian, an old Oxford friend of mine¹². I have just been telling him what a good sitter you were¹³, and now you have spoiled everything."

"You have not spoiled my pleasure in meeting you, Mr. Gray," said Lord Henry, stepping forward and offering his hand. "My aunt has often spoken to me about you. You are one of her favourites, and, I am afraid, one of her victims also."

"I am in Lady Agatha's black books at present¹⁴," answered Dorian. "I promised to go to a club in Whitechapel¹⁵ with her last Tuesday, and I forgot all about it. I don't know what she will say to me. I am far too frightened to call."

Lord Henry looked at him. Yes, he was certainly wonderfully handsome, with his curved red lips, honest blue eyes and gold hair. "Oh, don't worry about my aunt. You are one of her favourite people. And you are too charming to waste time working for poor people."

Lord Henry sat down on the sofa and opened his cigarette box. The painter was busy mixing colours and getting his brushes ready. Suddenly, he looked at Lord Henry and said, "Harry, I want to finish this picture today. Would you think it very rude of me if I asked you to go away?"

Lord Henry smiled, and looked at Dorian Gray. "Shall I go, Mr. Gray?" he asked.

"Oh, please don't, Lord Henry. I see that Basil is in one of his difficult moods, and I hate it when he is difficult. And I want you to tell me why I should not help the poor people."

"That would be very boring, Mr. Gray. But I certainly will not run away if you do not want me to. You don't really mind, Basil, do you? You have often told me that you liked your sitters to have some one to chat to."

Hallward bit his lip. "If Dorian wishes it, of course you must stay."

Lord Henry took up his hat and gloves. "No, I am afraid I must go. Good-bye, Mr. Gray. Come and see me some afternoon in Curzon Street¹⁶. I am nearly always at home at five o'clock. Write to me when you are coming. I should be sorry to miss you."

"Basil," cried Dorian Gray, "if Lord Henry Wotton goes, I will go too. You never open your lips while you are painting, and it is horribly boring just standing here. Ask him to stay. I insist upon it."

"All right, please stay, Harry. For Dorian and for me," said Hallward, staring at his picture. "It is true that I never talk when I am working, and never listen either. It must be very boring for my sitters. Sit down again, Harry. And Dorian don't move about too much, or listen to what Lord Henry says. He has a very bad influence over all his friends, with the single exception of myself."

¹¹ **That entirely depends on how you sit today.** – Это зависит от того, как вы сегодня будете позировать.

¹² **an old Oxford friend of mine** – мой старый товарищ по Оксфордскому университету

¹³ **I have just been telling him what a good sitter you were.** – Я только что говорил ему, что вы превосходно позируете.

¹⁴ **I am in Lady Agatha's black books at present.** – Теперь я у леди Агаты на плохом счету.

¹⁵ **Whitechapel** – Уайтчепел

¹⁶ **Curzon Street** – Керзон стрит

Dorian Gray stood while Hallward finished his portrait. He liked what he had seen of Lord Henry. He was so unlike Basil. And he had such a beautiful voice. After a few moments he said to him, "Have you really a very bad influence, Lord Henry? As bad as Basil says?"

"There is no such thing as a good influence, Mr. Gray. All influence is immoral."

"Why?"

"Because to influence someone is to give them your soul. Each person must have his own personality."

"Just turn your head a little more to the right, Dorian, like a good boy," said the painter. He was not listening to the conversation and only knew that there was a new look on the boy's face.

"And yet," continued Lord Henry, in his low musical voice, "I believe that if one man lived his life fully and completely he could change the world. He would be a work of art greater than anything we have ever imagined. But the bravest man among us is afraid of himself. You, Mr. Gray, are very young but you have had passions that have made you afraid, dreams—"

"Stop!" cried Dorian Gray, "I don't know what to say. There is some answer to you, but I cannot find it. Don't speak. Let me think. Or, rather, let me try not to think."

For nearly ten minutes he stood there with his lips open and his eyes strangely bright. The words that Basil's friend had spoken had touched his soul. Yes, there had been things in his boyhood that he had not understood. He understood them now.

With his smile, Lord Henry watched him. He knew the exact moment when to say nothing. He was surprised at the sudden effect of his words on the boy. How fascinating the boy was!

Hallward continued painting and did not notice that the others were silent.

"Basil, I am tired of standing," cried Dorian Gray suddenly. "I must go out and sit in the garden. The air is stifling here."

"My dear fellow, I am so sorry. When I am painting, I can't think of anything else. But you never sat better. You were perfectly still. And I have caught the effect I wanted. I don't know what Harry has been saying to you, but there is a wonderful bright look in your eyes. I suppose he has been flattering you. You mustn't believe a word that he says."

"He has certainly not been flattering me. Perhaps that is the reason that I don't believe anything he has told me."

"You know you believe it all," said Lord Henry, looking at him with his dreamy eyes. "I will go out to the garden with you. It is horribly hot in the studio. Basil, let us have something iced to drink, something with strawberries in it."

"Don't keep Dorian too long," said the painter. "This is going to be my masterpiece."

Lord Henry went out to the garden, and found Dorian Gray holding a flower to his face. He came close to him, and put his hand on his shoulder.

Dorian Gray frowned and turned his head away. He liked the tall young man who was standing by him. His dark, romantic face interested him. There was something in his low, musical voice that was fascinating. But he felt a little afraid. Why was this stranger having a strong influence on him like this? He had known Basil Hallward for months, but the friendship between them had not changed him. Suddenly someone had come into his life and turned it upside down¹⁷. Someone who seemed to have the key to the mystery of life itself.

And yet, what was there to be afraid of? He was not a schoolboy or a girl. It was silly to be afraid.

"Let us go and sit out of the sun. I don't want you to be burnt by the sun."

"What does that matter?" cried Dorian Gray, laughing as he sat down on the seat at the end of the garden.

"It should matter very much to you, Mr. Gray."

"Why?"

¹⁷ **upside down** – вверх ногами

“Because you are young, and youth is the best thing in the world.”

“I don’t feel that, Lord Henry.”

“No, you don’t feel it now. Some day when you are old and ugly you will feel it terribly. Now, wherever you go, you charm the world. Will it always be so? You have a wonderfully beautiful face, Mr. Gray.”

“I don’t think.”

“Don’t frown. It is true. The gods have been good to you. But what the gods give they quickly take away¹⁸. You have only a few years in which to really live, perfectly and fully. Live your life now, while you are still young!”

Suddenly the painter appeared at the door and waved at them to come in. They turned to each other and smiled.

“I am waiting,” he cried. “Do come in. The light is quite perfect, and you can bring your drinks.”

They got up and walked towards the house together.

“You are glad you have met me, Mr. Gray,” said Lord Henry, looking at him.

“Yes, I am glad now. I wonder whether I will always be glad.”

“Always! That is a terrible word. Women are so fond of using it.”

After about a quarter of an hour Hallward stopped painting. He stood back and looked at the portrait for a few moments. Then he bent down and signed his name in red paint on the bottom left-hand corner.

“It is finished,” he cried. “And you have sat splendidly to-day. I am awfully obliged to you.”

Lord Henry came over and examined the picture. It was certainly a wonderful work of art.

“My dear man,” he said. “It is the best portrait of our time. Mr. Gray, come over and look at yourself.”

Dorian walked across to look at the painting. When he saw it his cheeks went red with pleasure. He felt that he recognized his own beauty for the first time. But then he remembered what Lord Henry had said. His beauty would only be there for a few years. One day he would be old and ugly.

“Don’t you like it?” cried Hallward, not understanding why the boy was silent.

“Of course he likes it,” said Lord Henry. “Who wouldn’t like it? It is one of the greatest paintings in modern art. I will give you anything you like to ask for it. I must have it.”

“It is not my property, Harry.”

“Whose is it?”

“Dorian’s, of course,” answered the painter.

“He is a very lucky fellow.”

“How sad it is!” said Dorian Gray, who was still staring at his own portrait. “I will grow old and horrible. But this painting will always stay young. It will never be older than this day in June... If only it were the other way!”

“What do you mean?” asked Hallward.

“If I could stay young and the picture grow old! For that – for that – I would give everything! Yes, there is nothing in the whole world I would not give! I would give my soul for that!”

“I don’t think you would like that, Basil!” cried Lord Henry, laughing.

“I certainly would not, Harry,” said Hallward.

Dorian Gray turned and looked at him. “You like your art better than your friends. I am no more to you than a green bronze figure.”

The painter stared in amazement. It was so unlike Dorian to speak like that. What had happened? He seemed quite angry. His face was flushed and his cheeks burning.

¹⁸ But what the gods give they quickly take away. – Но боги скоро отнимают то, что дают.

“You will always like this painting. But how long will you like me? Until I start getting old. Lord Henry Wotton is perfectly right. When I lose my beauty, I will lose everything. I shall kill myself before I get old.”

Hallward turned white, and caught his hand. “Dorian! Dorian!” he cried. “Don’t talk like that, I have never had a friend like you, and I will never have another. How can you be jealous of a painting? You are more beautiful than any work of art.”

“I am jealous of everything whose beauty does not die. I am jealous of the portrait you have painted of me. Why should it keep what I must lose?” Hot tears came into his eyes as he threw himself on the sofa.

“You did this, Harry,” said the painter, angrily.

Lord Henry shook his head. “It is the real Dorian Gray – that is all.”

“Harry, I can’t argue with two of my best friends at once. Between you both you have made me hate the best piece of work I have ever done. What is it but canvas and colour?¹⁹ I will destroy it.”

Dorian Gray watched as Hallward walked over to the painting-table and picked up a knife. The boy jumped from the sofa, tore the knife from Hallward’s hand and threw it across the room. “Don’t, Basil, don’t!” he cried. “It would be murder!”

“I am glad that you appreciate my work at last, Dorian,” said the painter coldly. “I never thought you would.”

“Appreciate it? I am in love with it, Basil. It is part of myself. I feel that.”

“What silly people you are, both of you!” said Lord Henry. “I don’t like scenes, except on the stage. Let’s forget about the painting for one night and go to the theatre.”

“I would like to come to the theatre with you, Lord Henry.”

“And you will come too, won’t you, Basil?”

“I can’t,” said Hallward. “I have too much work to do.”

“Well, you and I will go together, Mr. Gray.”

The painter bit his lip and walked over to the picture.

¹⁹ What is it but canvas and colour? – Ведь это только холст и краски.

Chapter 3

At half-past twelve next day Lord Henry Wotton strolled from Curzon Street over to the Albany to call on his uncle, Lord Fermor. His father had been our ambassador at Madrid, but had retired from the diplomatic service.

When Lord Henry entered the room, he found his uncle sitting in a rough shooting-coat and smoking. "Well, Harry," said the old gentleman, "what brings you out so early? I thought you dandies never got up till two, and were not visible till five."

"Pure family affection²⁰, I assure you, Uncle George. I want to get something out of you.²¹"

"Money, I suppose," said Lord Fermor. "Well, sit down and tell me all about it. Young people, nowadays, imagine that money is everything."

"Yes," murmured Lord Henry, settling his button-hole in his coat, "and when they grow older they know it. But I don't want money. What I want is information: not useful information, of course; useless information. Do you know Mr. Dorian Gray?"

"Mr. Dorian Gray? Who is he?" asked Lord Fermor.

"That is what I have come to learn²², Uncle George. Or rather, I know who he is. He is the last Lord Kelso's grandson²³. His mother was a Devereux, Lady Margaret Devereux²⁴. I want you to tell me about his mother. What was she like? Whom did she marry? I am very much interested in Mr. Gray at present. I have only just met him."

"Kelso's grandson!" echoed the old gentleman. "Kelso's grandson! Of course, I knew his mother intimately. She was a very beautiful girl, Margaret Devereux, but she married a penniless young fellow – a mere nobody²⁵, sir. Certainly I remember the whole thing as if it happened yesterday. Lady Margaret fell in love when she was very young. She ran away from home and married a soldier. But she did not have a happy life. The poor chap was killed in a duel, a few months after the marriage. Lord Kelso was very angry and never talked to Lady Margaret again. Dorian's father, the soldier, was killed before Dorian was born. Lady Margaret died before Dorian was a year old. So Dorian was an orphan. So she left a son, did she? I had forgotten that. What sort of boy is he? If he is like his mother, he must be a good-looking boy."

"He is very good-looking," said Lord Henry.

"He should have a lot of money waiting for him. Dorian is going to be very rich. Soon Dorian would be twenty-one. Then he would have all Lord Kelso's money," continued the old man.

"And... his mother was very beautiful?" asked Lord Henry.

"Margaret Devereux was one of the loveliest creatures I ever saw, Harry. She could have married anybody she chose. She was romantic, though. By the way, Harry, talking about silly marriages, Dartmoor²⁶ wants to marry an American? Ain't²⁷ English girls good enough for him?"

"It is rather fashionable to marry Americans just now, Uncle George."

"Is she pretty?"

"She behaves as if she was beautiful. Most American women do. It is the secret of their charm."

²⁰ **family affection** – родственные связи

²¹ **I want to get something out of you.** – Мне от вас кое-что нужно.

²² **That is what I have come to learn.** – Вот это-то я и пришёл у вас узнать.

²³ **the last Lord Kelso's grandson** – внук последнего лорда Келсо

²⁴ **Margaret Devereux** – Маргарет Девере

²⁵ **a mere nobody** – полнейшее ничтожество

²⁶ **Dartmoor** – Дартмур

²⁷ **ain't** = are not

“Why can’t these American women stay in their own country? They are always telling us that it is the paradise for women.”

“It is. That is the reason why, like Eve²⁸, they are so excessively anxious to get out of it²⁹,” said Lord Henry. “Good-bye, Uncle George. Thanks for giving me the information I wanted. I always like to know everything about my new friends, and nothing about my old ones.”

“Where are you lunching, Harry?”

“At Aunt Agatha’s. I have asked myself and Mr. Gray. He is her latest protege.”

“Tell your Aunt Agatha, Harry, not to bother me any more with her charity appeals³⁰. I am sick of them. Why, the good woman thinks that I have nothing to do but to write cheques for her.”

Lord Henry went out. It was a sad and romantic story. Now Harry was even more interested in Dorian Gray. Dorian Gray... How charming he had been at dinner the night before! Talking to him was like playing upon an exquisite violin. What a pity it was that such beauty was destined to fade³¹!

Lord Henry smiled. Yes; he would try to dominate Dorian Gray – had already, indeed, half done so. There was something fascinating in this son of Love and Death.

Suddenly he stopped and glanced up at the houses. He found that he had passed his aunt’s some distance, and, smiling to himself, turned back.

“Late as usual, Harry,” cried his aunt, shaking her head at him.

His neighbour was Mrs. Vandeleur³², one of his aunt’s oldest friends. Lord Henry began to talk. He felt that the eyes of Dorian Gray were fixed on him. He charmed his listeners, everybody listened to Harry. But Harry was not talking to everybody. He was talking to Dorian. Sometimes Dorian smiled, sometimes his eyes were wide open with surprise. Dorian listened to everything. Dorian Gray never took his gaze off him, but sat like one under a spell³³.

Dorian Gray spent every day of the next three weeks with Lord Henry. They had lunch together and went to parties. And Dorian was influenced by Lord Henry more and more. When Dorian was alone, he was always looking for pleasurable things to do.

²⁸ Eve – Ева

²⁹ they are so excessively anxious to get out of it – они стремятся выбраться оттуда

³⁰ charity appeals – воззвания о пожертвованиях

³¹ such beauty was destined to fade – такой красоте суждено увянуть

³² Vandeleur – Ванделер

³³ under a spell – заколдованный, очарованный

Chapter 4

One afternoon, a month later, Dorian Gray was sitting in a luxurious arm-chair, in the little library of Lord Henry's house in Mayfair³⁴. Lord Henry had not yet come in. He was always late, Dorian Gray was bored and once or twice he thought of going away.

At last he heard a step outside and the door opened. "How late you are, Harry!" he said. "I'm afraid it is not Harry, Mr. Gray. It is only his wife."

He looked around quickly and got to his feet. "I am sorry, I thought —"

"I know you quite well by your photographs, I think my husband has got seventeen of them."

"Not seventeen, Lady Henry?"

"Well, eighteen, then. And I saw you with him the other night at the theatre. But here is Harry!"

Lord Henry smiled at them both. "So sorry I am late, Dorian."

"I am afraid I must go," said Lady Henry. "Goodbye, Mr. Gray. Goodbye, Harry. You are eating out, I suppose? I am too. Perhaps I will see you later."

"Perhaps, my dear," said Lord Henry, shutting the door behind her. Then he lit a cigarette and threw himself down on the sofa.

"Never marry a woman with straw-coloured hair, Dorian," he said.

"Why, Harry?"

"Because they are so sentimental."

"But I like sentimental people."

"Never marry at all, Dorian. Men marry because they are tired; women, because they are curious: both are disappointed."

"I don't think I will marry, Harry. I am too much in love. I'm in love with the most beautiful girl."

"Who are you in love with?" asked Lord Henry, after a pause.

"With an actress," said Dorian Gray. His face became red.

"How ordinary."

"You would not say that if you saw her, Harry."

"Who is she?"

"Her name is Sibyl Vane³⁵."

"I've never heard of her."

"No one has. People will some day, though. She is a genius."

"My dear boy, no woman is a genius. Women never have anything to say, but they say it charmingly."

"Ah! Harry, your views terrify me."

"Never mind that. How long have you known her?"

"About three weeks."

"And where did you meet her?"

"I will tell you, Harry, but you must not laugh. You mustn't laugh at me. I met her because of you."

"Because of me?"

"Yes. You told me to find out about life. You told me to enjoy life – the good things and the evil things. For days after I met you I searched the streets for beauty. I walked around London. There was excitement and danger everywhere. I knew that something wonderful was going to happen. I walked around the East End until I found a dirty little theatre. I see you are laughing. It is horrible of you!"

³⁴ **Mayfair** – Мэйфер

³⁵ **Sibyl Vane** – Сибилла Вэйн

“I am not laughing, Dorian. Go on with your story.³⁶”

“The play was *Romeo and Juliet*³⁷. Romeo was a fat, ugly old actor. But Juliet was a beautiful young actress. She was about seventeen years old. Her hair was dark brown. Her face was small and pale – like a little flower. Her eyes were large and dark blue. I fell in love with her immediately, Harry; she was the loveliest thing I had ever seen in my life. Why didn’t you tell me about actresses?”

“Because everybody falls in love with actresses, Dorian,” said Lord Henry. “When did you meet her?”

“I went back the next night and the night after that. On the third evening I waited for her outside the theatre.”

“What was she like?”

“Sibyl? Oh, she was shy and gentle. There is something of a child about her. She said quite simply to me, ‘You look more like a prince. I must call you Prince Charming³⁸.’”

“Miss Sibyl knows how to flatter you.”

“You don’t understand her, Harry. She regarded me merely as a person in a play³⁹. She knows nothing of life. She lives with her mother. Sibyl is the only thing I care about.”

“That is the reason, I suppose, that you never have dinner with me now. I thought it might be something romantic.”

“My dear Harry, we eat together every day,” said Dorian.

“You always come very late.”

“Well, I have to see Sibyl play,” he cried.

“Can you have dinner with me tonight, Dorian?”

He shook his head. “Tonight she is Imogen⁴⁰,” he answered, and tomorrow night she will be Juliet.”

“When is she Sibyl Vane?”

“Never.”

“I congratulate you.”

“How horrible you are! She is all the great heroines of the world in one⁴¹. I love her, and I must make her love me. You, who know all the secrets of life, tell me how to charm Sibyl Vane to love me! I want to make Romeo jealous. I want you and Basil to come and watch her tomorrow night. You are certain to recognize that she is wonderful⁴².”

“All right. Tomorrow evening. Will you see Basil before then? Or shall I write to him?”

“Dear Basil! I haven’t seen him for a week. It is rather horrible of me as he sent me my portrait a few days ago. I love looking at it. Perhaps you should write to him. I don’t want to see him alone. He says things that annoy me. He gives me good advice.”

Lord Henry smiled. “People are very fond of giving away advice they need themselves.”

“Oh, Basil is a good man, but I don’t think he really understands about art and beauty. Since I have known you, Harry, I have discovered that.”

“Basil, my dear boy, puts everything that is charming in him into his work.”

“I must go now, Harry. My Juliet is waiting for me. Don’t forget about tomorrow. Goodbye.”

As Dorian left the room, Lord Henry began to think about what he had just learned. Certainly few people had ever interested him so much as Dorian Gray. Yet the mad worship of this actress did not make him annoyed or jealous. He was pleased by it. It made the boy more interesting to study.

³⁶ **Go on with your story.** – Рассказывайте дальше.

³⁷ **Romeo and Juliet** – Ромео и Джульетта

³⁸ **Prince Charming** – Прекрасный Принц

³⁹ **She regarded me merely as a person in a play.** – Для неё я всё равно что герой какой-то пьесы.

⁴⁰ **Imogen** – Имоджена

⁴¹ **She is all the great heroines of the world in one.** – В ней живут все великие героини мира.

⁴² **You are certain to recognize that she is wonderful.** – Ничуть не сомневаюсь, что и вы признаете её великолепной.

Soul and body, body and soul – how mysterious they were! There was animalism in the soul, and the body had its moments of spirituality.

When he arrived home, about half past twelve o'clock, he saw a telegram lying on the hall table. He opened it and found it was from Dorian Gray. Dorian Gray was going to marry Sibyl Vane.

Chapter 5

“Mother, Mother, I am so happy,” whispered Sibyl Vane. “I am so happy, and you must be happy, too!”

Mrs. Vane did not look very happy. She was a small, thin woman who always looked tired. There was a lot of make up on her face and on her dry, thin mouth.

“I am only happy, Sibyl, when I see you act. You must not think of anything but your acting. Mr. Isaacs has been very good to us, and we owe him money.”

“Money, Mother?” she cried, “what does money matter? Love is more than money.”

“Oh, Sibyl,” said Mrs. Vane, “you mustn’t think about the young man who comes to the theatre. You must think about your acting. Mr. Isaacs will be angry if you don’t act well. He has given us a lot of money and you mustn’t make a theatre manager angry. You must not forget that, Sibyl. Fifty pounds is a very large sum. Mr. Isaacs has been most considerate.”

“I don’t like Mr. Isaacs, Mother, and I don’t care about money,” replied Sibyl, “I’m in love with Prince Charming.”

“Sibyl, Mr. Isaacs gave us fifty pounds to pay our bills and buy clothes for James. You love James – you love your brother – don’t you?” said Mrs. Vane.

“Yes, of course I do,” replied Sibyl. “But we have Prince Charming now. He will help us. We don’t need Mr. Isaacs.”

Sibyl Vane lived with her mother, and brother, James. They lived in London. But they lived in a small house in the north of London, a long way from Lord Henry’s large, expensive house.

It was the day after Sibyl had become engaged to Dorian. Sibyl and her mother were talking in their small living room.

“My child,” said her mother, “you are too young to think of falling in love. Besides, what do you know of this young man? You don’t even know his name. I’m very worried about you. And you know James is going away tomorrow. I’m worried about James too, James is going away to Australia and you have fallen in love. But if he is rich...”

“Ah! Mother, Mother, let me be happy!”

At that moment the door opened and James Vane came into the room. He was sixteen years old and he did not look like his sister. Sibyl was small and beautiful, with shining brown hair. James was large, with big hands and feet. His hair was dull and dark and not well combed, and there was something rough and angry in his expression.

James Vane looked into his sister’s face with tenderness. “I want you to come out with me for a walk, Sibyl. I don’t suppose I shall ever see this horrid London again. I am sure I don’t want to.”

“My son, don’t say such dreadful things,” murmured Mrs. Vane.

Sibyl went to get her coat and James spoke to his mother. “I’m worried about Sibyl,” he said. “I hear a gentleman comes every night to the theatre and goes behind to talk to her. Is that right? What about that?”

“Don’t worry, James,” Mrs. Vane replied. “Young men often fall in love with actresses.”

“But you don’t know his name,” said James, angrily, “Mother, you must take care of Sibyl.”

Sibyl and James went for a walk in Hyde Park. The park was busy. There were lots of people. There were people walking and people sitting in carriages pulled by horses.

Sibyl was happy. “I think you will have a wonderful life in Australia, James. I think you will become rich...”

She stopped speaking because James was not listening to her.

“You are not listening to a word I am saying, Jim,” cried Sibyl, “and I am making the most delightful plans for your future. Do say something. What’s bothering you?”

"I heard that there is a man who comes to see you every night at the theatre. Why haven't you told me about him? He can't be any good for you⁴³."

"Jim! Why do you say such things?"

"You don't know his name, do you?"

"Stop, Jim!" she exclaimed. "You must not say anything against him. I love him. I call him Prince Charming. I will love him for ever."

"You don't know his name," James said again, angrily. "He is a rich young man, and he will not marry you."

"He is a prince!" she cried musically. "What more do you want?"

"He wants to enslave you. Sibyl, you are mad about him."

She laughed and took his arm.

Just then a carriage drove by. There were two women in it and a young man with curly blond hair and laughing eyes.

"Oh, look! Look, there he is! He's in that carriage!" Sibyl shouted.

"Who?"

"Prince Charming."

"Where? Show him to me."

She pointed across the park at a carriage. James looked across the park. But, at that moment, another carriage suddenly passed in front of the brother and sister. James never saw Prince Charming.

"Oh dear," said Sibyl, "I wanted you to see him."

"I wanted to see him too," replied her brother, "because I will kill him if he ever hurts you. Do you hear me Sybil? I'll kill him!"

James Vane's eyes looked red with anger. At first Sibyl was angry with her brother. But she remembered that he was sixteen years old. He was a boy. He had never been in love.

"You won't hurt a man I love, will you, James?" she said.

"No, I won't," he said at last. "I won't hurt him if you love him."

"I will always love Prince Charming," said Sibyl. "And he will always love me."

So Sibyl and James were friends again. But that evening, James spoke again to their mother.

"If this young man hurts Sibyl," said he again. "I will find him and I will kill him. I will kill him like a dog!"

"Jim, what are you saying? Come, let us go. You will be late for your boat."

⁴³ He can't be any good for you. – Знакомство с ним к добру не приведёт.

Chapter 6

"I suppose you have heard the news, Basil?" said Lord Henry the following evening. They were in the dining-room of the Bristol Hotel.

"No, Harry," answered the artist, giving his hat and coat to the waiter. "What is it? Nothing about politics, I hope! They don't interest me."

"Dorian Gray is going to be married," said Lord Henry, watching him as he spoke.

Hallward frowned. "Impossible!" he cried.

"It is perfectly true."

"To whom?"

"To some little actress."

"I can't believe it. Dorian is far too sensible⁴⁴."

"Basil, whenever a man does a completely stupid thing, it is always for a good reason."

"I hope this girl is good, Harry. I don't want to see Dorian tied to some vile creature."

"Oh, she is better than good – she is beautiful," murmured Lord Henry. "Dorian says that she is beautiful and he is not often wrong about these things. Your portrait has helped him understand beauty in others. We are to see her tonight, if that boy doesn't forget."

"Are you serious?"

"Quite serious, Basil."

"But how can Dorian marry an actress, Harry? It is absurd," cried the painter, walking up and down the room, biting his lip. "Do you approve of it, Harry? You can't approve of it, possibly."

"I never approve, or disapprove, of anything now. You know I am not a champion of marriage. Dorian Gray falls in love with a beautiful actress who plays Juliet. He asks her to marry him. Why not? I hope that Dorian Gray marries this girl and worships her for six months. Then he can suddenly become fascinated by another woman."

⁴⁴ **Dorian is far too sensible.** – Дориан не так безрассуден.

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