

personal english



Book #33

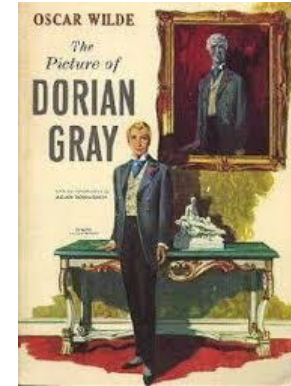
The Picture of Dorian Gray

by Oscar Wilde

Published in **1890** by **Oscar Wilde**, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is one of the numerous literary explorations of the psychological motif of the **Doppelgänger**, that is, the dark side of a main character who stalks and antagonizes him until causing his final destruction.

Among the best-known examples of this motif there are **William Wilson**, a short story by **Edgar Allan Poe** (1839), **La peau de chagrin** by **Honoré de Balzac** (1831) and **The Double** by **Fyodor Dostoevsky** (1846).

In *The Picture of Dorian Gray* Wilde lingers on the slow-but-steady **moral degradation** of the main character, a young, wealthy and attractive young man in love with theatre actress **Sybil Vane**. Dorian first causes his love to commit suicide and then gradually turns into a selfish and merciless exploiter and sex-addict. As if by magic, though, it's not his face that bears the marks of such degradation, but his **portrait**, which Dorian slowly comes to loathe and hide from sight...



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