Excerpt: *The Picture of Dorian Gray* Chapter 6

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| I have highlighted some selections of detail that you may find effective in developing the characterization of Lord Henry Wotton and Basil Hallward (yellow highlights apply better to Lord Henry’s hedonistic world view whereas green highlights may illustrate better the moralistic views Basil Hallward embodies.  Use both the **direct quotations** from my annotation and your own (if there are) and the **line reference** in writing two comparison paragraphs in characterizing Lord Henry and Basil Hallward. |

“Women are wonderfully practical,” murmured Lord Henry, “much more practical than we are. In situations of

that kind we often forget to say anything about marriage, and they always remind us.”

Hallward laid his hand upon his arm. “Don’t, Harry. You have annoyed Dorian. He is not like other men. He

would never bring misery upon any one. His nature is too fine for that.”

5 Lord Henry looked across the table. “Dorian is never annoyed with me,” he answered. “I asked the question

for the best reason possible, for the only reason, indeed, that excuses one for asking any question— simple

curiosity. I have a theory that it is always the women who propose to us, and not we who propose to the

women. Except, of course, in middle-class life. But then the middle classes are not modern.”

Dorian Gray laughed, and tossed his head. “You are quite incorrigible, Harry; but I don’t mind. It is

10 impossible to be angry with you. When you see Sibyl Vane, you will feel that the man who could wrong her

would be a beast, a beast without a heart. I cannot understand how anyone can wish to shame the thing he

loves. I love Sibyl Vane. I want to place her on a pedestal of gold and to see the world worship the woman

who is mine. What is marriage? An irrevocable vow. You mock at it for that. Ah! don’t mock. It is an

irrevocable vow that I want to take. Her trust makes me faithful, her belief makes me good. When I am with

15 her, I regret all that you have taught me. I become different from what you have known me to be. I am

changed, and the mere touch of Sibyl Vane’s hand makes me forget you and all your wrong, fascinating,

poisonous, delightful theories.”

“And those are . . . ?” asked Lord Henry, helping himself to some salad.

“Oh, your theories about life, your theories about love, your theories about pleasure. All your theories, in fact,

20 Harry.”

“Pleasure is the only thing worth having a theory about,” he answered in his slow melodious voice. “But I am

afraid I cannot claim my theory as my own. It belongs to Nature, not to me. Pleasure is Nature’s test, her sign

of approval. When we are happy, we are always good, but when we are good, we are not always happy.”

“Ah! but what do you mean by good?” cried Basil Hallward.

25 “Yes,” echoed Dorian, leaning back in his chair and looking at Lord Henry over the heavy clusters of purple-

lipped irises that stood in the centre of the table, “what do you mean by good, Harry?”

“To be good is to be in harmony with one’s self,” he replied, touching the thin stem of his glass with his pale,

fine-pointed fingers. “Discord is to be forced to be in harmony with others. One’s own life—that is the

important thing. As for the lives of one’s neighbours, if one wishes to be a prig or a Puritan, one can flaunt

30 one’s moral views about them, but they are not one’s concern. Besides, individualism has really the higher

aim. Modern morality consists in accepting the standard of one’s age. I consider that for any man of culture to

accept the standard of his age is a form of the grossest immorality.”

“But, surely, if one lives merely for one’s self, Harry, one pays a terrible price for doing so?” suggested the

painter.

35 “Yes, we are overcharged for everything nowadays. I should fancy that the real tragedy of the poor is that

they can afford nothing but self-denial. Beautiful sins, like beautiful things, are the privilege of the rich.”

“One has to pay in other ways but money.”

“What sort of ways, Basil?”

“Oh! I should fancy in remorse, in suffering, in . . . well, in the consciousness of degradation.”

40 Lord Henry shrugged his shoulders. “My dear fellow, mediaeval art is charming, but mediaeval emotions are

out of date. One can use them in fiction, of course. But then the only things that one can use in fiction are the

things that one has ceased to use in fact. Believe me, no civilized man ever regrets a pleasure, and no

uncivilized man ever knows what a pleasure is.”