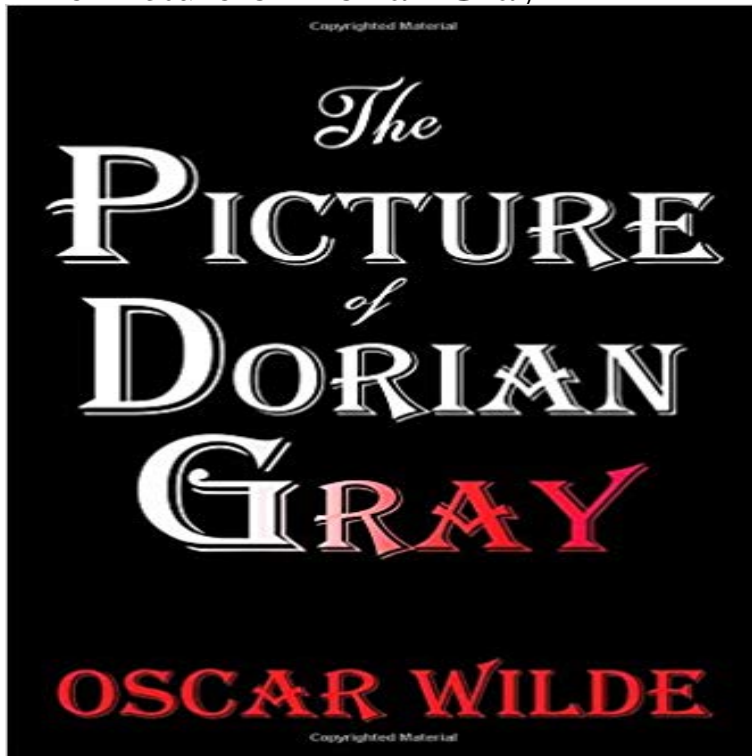


The Picture of Dorian Gray



The Picture of Dorian Gray is an 1891 philosophical novel by Irish writer and playwright Oscar Wilde. The novel tells of a young man named Dorian Gray, the subject of a painting by artist Basil Hallward. Dorian is selected for his remarkable physical beauty, and Basil becomes strongly infatuated with Dorian, believing that his beauty is responsible for a new mode of art. Talking in Basils garden, Dorian meets Lord Henry Wotton, a friend of Basils, and becomes enthralled by Lord Henrys world view. Espousing a new kind of hedonism, Lord Henry suggests that the only thing worth pursuing in life is beauty, and the fulfillment of the senses. Realising that one day his beauty will fade, Dorian cries out, wishing that the portrait Basil has painted of him would age rather than himself. Dorians wish is fulfilled, subsequently plunging him into a sequence of debauched acts. The portrait serves as a reminder of the effect each act has upon his soul, each sin being displayed as a new sign of aging on the portrait. The Picture of Dorian Gray is considered one of the last works of classic gothic horror fiction with a strong Faustian theme. It deals with the artistic movement of the decadents, and homosexuality, both of which caused some controversy when the book was first published. However, in modern times, the book has been referred to as one of the modern classics of Western literature.

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