

*Oscar Wilde's*  
**Dorian Gray**  
Adaptation by Mike Parker

**HARRIETT**

I lunched with Victor today. He is a sentimental man. Never marry a sentimental man, Dorian.

**DORIAN**

But I like sentimental men.

**HARRIETT**

Never marry at all. Men marry because they are tired; women because they are curious. Both are disappointed. Just ask Marguerite. When her third husband died, her hair turned quite gold from grief.

**DORIAN**

Harriett! How can you say such a thing?

**MARGUERITE**

Pay no attention to Harriett, Miss Gray. She is really wonderful, and so full of surprises. But she is still décolletée. When she wears one of her smart gowns she looks like an edition de luxe of a bad French novel.

**HARRIETT**

And yet Marguerite is the one with the prodigious capacity for familial affection. After all, Ferrol is her fourth husband, and I am still working on my first. I hear she had all their hearts embalmed and hung at her girdle.

**MARGUERITE**

You mustn't believe a word of it, Miss Gray. It is all nonsense, for none of my husbands had any heart at all.

**DORIAN**

Lady Marguerite, if it is not too forward of me to ask, you are so young and beautiful. Why do you marry such old men who seem to die so frequently?

**MARGUERITE**

My dear, old men are delightful. They require so little while they are alive, and they leave so much behind when they die.

**DORIAN**

I don't think I am likely to marry, Harriett. I am too much in love for that.

**HARRIETT**

In love, you say? With who?

**DORIAN**

With an actor.

**MARGUERITE**

That is a rather common debut.

**DORIAN**

You would not say so if you saw him, Lady Marguerite. John Vane.

**MARGUERITE**

Never heard of him.

**DORIAN**

No one has. People will someday, however. He is a genius.

**MARGUERITE**

My dear, no *man* is a genius. Men are a decorative sex. They never have anything to say, but they say it so charmingly.

**HARRIETT**

Quite true. Ultimately there are only two kinds of men - the plain kind and the fancy kind. Plain men are useful if you want to gain a reputation for respectability. Fancy men are very

charming but they can't be admitted into decent society. But enough of that. Tell us about your genius. Is he plain or fancy? How long have you known him?

**DORIAN**

About three weeks, and you mustn't be unsympathetic about it. After all, it never would have happened if I had not met you. You filled me with the wild desire to know everything about life.

I remember you once said the search for beauty was the real secret of life. So I went in search of beauty, and I found it at this little theatre. I paid a whole guinea for a stage box - I can't tell you to this day why I did so. Yet, if I hadn't I should have missed the greatest romance of my life.

I see you are laughing at me. It is horrid of you.

**HARRIETT**

We are not laughing, Dorian. At least not at you. But you should not say the *greatest* romance of your life. You should say the *first* romance of your life. This is merely the beginning.