

NOTE: There are internal cuts in this scene for audition purposes. Please refer to this edited scene rather than the full script.

BASIL

Why is it, Dorian, that a man like the Duke of Berwick leaves the room when you enter it? There was Sir Henry Ashton, who had to leave England with a tarnished name. What about Adrian Singleton and his dreadful end? What about the young Duke of Perth?

DORIAN

Stop, Basil. You're talking about things of which you know nothing. You ask me why Berwick leaves a room when I enter it - it's because I know everything about his life, not because he knows anything about mine. You ask me about Henry Ashton and young Perth. Did I teach one his vices, and the other his debauchery? If Adrian Singleton writes his friend's name across a bill, am I his keeper?

BASIL

Dorian, that's not the question. When I first heard these stories I laughed, said that it was absurd - that I knew you thoroughly, and that you were incapable of anything of the kind. Know you? I wonder, do I know you? Before I could answer that, I should have to see your soul.

DORIAN

To see my soul...

BASIL

Yes, but only God can do that.

DORIAN

*(Decisively)* You shall see it yourself, tonight. Why shouldn't you look at it? It's your own handiwork. Come - you have chattered enough about corruption, now you shall look on my soul face to face. Yes, you shall see the thing that you fancy only God can see.

BASIL

This is blasphemy, Dorian - you mustn't say things like that.

DORIAN

You think so?

BASIL

I know so. As for what I said to you tonight, I said it for your good. You know I have always been a staunch friend to you. *(He reaches to touch DORIAN)*

DORIAN

Don't touch me.

BASIL

Dorian, if you tell me that these horrible charges are absolutely untrue from beginning to end, I shall believe you...

DORIAN

Come upstairs, Basil. I keep a diary of my life from day to day, and it never leaves the room in which it is written. I shall show it to you.

BASIL

If you wish it, but don't ask me to read anything tonight. All I want is a plain answer to my question.

DORIAN

That shall be given to you upstairs. You will not have to read long. *(They begin the ascent upstairs)* You're the one man in the world who is entitled to know everything about me. You've had more to do with my life than you think. *(He unlocks and opens the door, and they enter)* Shut the door behind you. So you think it's only God who sees the soul, Basil? Draw the curtain back, and you will see mine.

BASIL

*(Hesitating, alarmed at DORIAN's behavior)* Dorian...

DORIAN

You won't? Then I'll do it myself.

*DORIAN tears off the curtain, exposing the portrait.*

BASIL

*(Startled by the disfigured portrait)* What does this mean?

DORIAN

Years ago, when I was a boy, you met me, devoted yourself to me, flattered me, and taught me to be vain of my good looks. One day you introduced me to a friend of yours, who explained to me the wonders of youth, and you finished the portrait that revealed to me the wonder of beauty. In a mad moment, that even now I don't know whether I regret or not, I made a wish - perhaps you would call it a prayer...

BASIL

I remember it... No - it's impossible. *(Looking closely at the surface of the painting, frantically grasping for an explanation)* The room is damp. Mildew has got into the canvas. The paints I used had some wretched poison in them. I tell you the thing is impossible.

DORIAN

What's impossible?

BASIL

You told me you had destroyed it.

DORIAN

I was wrong. It has destroyed me.

BASIL

I don't believe it's my picture.

DORIAN

Can't you see your romance in it?

BASIL

My romance, as you call it...

DORIAN

As *you* called it.

BASIL

...there was nothing evil in it, nothing shameful. You were to me such an ideal as I shall never meet again. This is the face of a satyr.

DORIAN

It is the face of my soul.