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### Picture of Dorian Gray

Our final members (and friends/family, etc) for this year will take place on Saturday,  
December 17th, starting at **1pm**

Jonathan Wicken, who has participated in a number of the marathon readings of works by  
Homer and Milton, has adapted Oscar Wilde's story, Picture of Dorian Gray for stage  
production. Globe members will be the privileged first people to see Jonathan's one-person  
version of this classic, Gothic tale.

Refreshments (tea, coffee and, possibly, cucumber sandwiches!) will be served half-way  
through the performance

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*For the benefit of those who may have forgotten the story, this is how it starts...(plot overview courtesy  
of Sparknotes and Bibliomania web-pages)*

In the stately London home of his aunt, Lady Brandon, the well-known artist Basil Hallward meets  
Dorian Gray. Dorian is a cultured, wealthy, and impossibly beautiful young man who immediately  
captures Basil's artistic imagination. Dorian sits for several portraits, and Basil often depicts him as an  
ancient Greek hero or a mythological figure. When the novel opens, the artist is completing his first  
portrait of Dorian as he truly is, but, as he admits to his friend Lord Henry Wotton, the painting  
disappoints him because it reveals too much of his feeling for his subject. Lord Henry, a famous wit  
who enjoys scandalizing his friends by celebrating youth, beauty, and the selfish pursuit of pleasure,  
disagrees, claiming that the portrait is Basil's masterpiece. Dorian arrives at the studio, and Basil  
reluctantly introduces him to Lord Henry, who he fears will have a damaging influence on the  
impressionable, young Dorian.

Basil's fears are well founded; before the end of their first conversation, Lord Henry upsets Dorian  
with a speech about the transient nature of beauty and youth. Worried that these, his most impressive  
characteristics, are fading day by day, Dorian curses his portrait, which he believes will one day remind  
him of the beauty he will have lost. In a fit of distress, he pledges his soul if only the painting could  
bear the burden of age and infamy, allowing him to stay forever young. In an attempt to appease  
Dorian, Basil gives him the portrait.

Over the next few weeks, Lord Henry's influence over Dorian grows stronger. The youth becomes a  
disciple of the "new Hedonism" and proposes to live a life dedicated to the pursuit of pleasure. He falls  
in love with Sibyl Vane, a young actress who performs in a theater in London's slums. He adores her  
acting; she, in turn, refers to him as "Prince Charming" and refuses to heed the warnings of her brother,  
James Vane, that Dorian is no good for her. Overcome by her emotions for Dorian, Sibyl decides that  
she can no longer act, wondering how she can pretend to love on the stage now that she has  
experienced the real thing. Dorian, who loves Sibyl *because* of her ability to act, cruelly breaks his  
engagement with her. After doing so, he returns home to notice that his face in Basil's portrait of him  
has changed: it now sneers. Frightened that his wish for his likeness in the painting to bear the ill  
effects of his behavior has come true and that his sins will be recorded on the canvas, he resolves to  
make amends with Sibyl the next day. The following afternoon, however, Lord Henry brings news that  
Sibyl has killed herself. At Lord Henry's urging, Dorian decides to consider her death a sort of artistic  
triumph—she personified tragedy—and to put the matter behind him. Meanwhile, Dorian hides his  
portrait in a remote upper room of his house, where no one other than he can watch its  
transformation....(and so the story continues...)