

DORIAN & LORD HENRY – SIDE 2

LORD HENRY: Let's get you some burgundy, Dorian. *(He crosses to the bar, laughs to himself)* You're nothing if not unpredictable, my boy. But this is a good thing. After all, consistency is the last refuge of the unimaginative.

DORIAN: You will stay a while, won't you Harry?

LORD HENRY: *(crossing to DORIAN, gives him a glass of burgundy)* Of course, Dorian. Good grief, you look like you've just seen a ghost.

DORIAN: I saw something at the window, just now.

LORD HENRY: What?

DORIAN: A man. I saw him in the window, right there.

LORD HENRY: What? *(jumping up and going to the window)* Well, I don't see anyone. No, nobody there.

DORIAN: You must! Don't you see him? He was moving behind the trees there, watching me, waiting for me?

LORD HENRY: *(smiling)* Oh yes, yes I see him now! It's the gardener, he wants to ask you what flowers you wish to have on your dining room table in the morning. *(laughing, he crosses to)* Your eyes are playing tricks on you, my dear fellow! You must visit my doctor in the morning.

DORIAN: Harry, I have a horrible feeling that something is going to happen to me.

LORD HENRY: What nonsense!

DORIAN: I hope it is, but I can't help feeling it.

LORD HENRY hands him a burgundy, DORIAN takes a big drink and cringes.

LORD HENRY: Don't be so nervy, Dorian. It's unbecoming. Let's talk of other things. *(takes a drink)* I was at the club last night. People are still talking about poor Basil's disappearance.

DORIAN: I should have thought they had got tired of that by this time.

LORD HENRY: My dear boy, they have only been talking about it for six weeks. They're not used to mental strain of having more than one topic every three months. They have been very fortunate lately, however. They have had that and now Alan Campbell's suicide...

DORIAN: Wait, what? Alan's suicide?

LORD HENRY: Man, haven't you been reading the papers?

DORIAN: *(fudging)* No, I've— I've been in the country these past few days.

LORD HENRY: Well, I hate to be the bearer of bad news, Dorian, but your old classmate Alan Campbell took his life last Saturday. Shot himself in the head, poor sod. Probably made someone suffer and couldn't bear the moral consequence associated with teasing nature once too many. That and the mysterious disappearance of Basil has got all of London talking. Scotland Yard insists that a

man in the grey ulster who left for Paris by the midnight train on the ninth of November was poor Basil, but the French police declare that Basil never arrived in Paris at all. I suppose in about a fortnight we shall be told that he has been seen in San Francisco.

DORIAN: *(shaking)* What do you think has happened to Basil?

LORD HENRY: I have not the slightest idea. If Basil chooses to hide himself, it is no business of mine. If he is dead, I don't want to think about him. Death is the only thing that ever terrifies me. I hate it.

DORIAN: Why?

LORD HENRY: Because one can survive everything nowadays except that. Death and vulgarity are the only two facts in the nineteenth century that one cannot explain away.

A pause.

DORIAN: What would you say, Harry, if I told you that I had murdered Basil?

LORD HENRY: I would say, my dear fellow, that you were posing for a character that doesn't suit you. *(a beat)* Dorian, I am your good friend. I think it's time you tell me. Tell me how you have kept your youth. You must have some secret....