

Superficial Beauty Traps the Soul

Living in a fast-paced world, we can feel that our lives are becoming more and more focused on superficial values. We value perfect images online, chase success and often ignore our inner selves. This situation is not new. More than a century ago, Oscar Wilde explored it in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, a story that warns that looking for superficial beauty can corrupt (腐化) the soul.

In the book, Wilde tells the story of a young man named Dorian Gray who trades his soul for eternal youth and beauty. While Gray stays handsome, a portrait of him grows old and ugly, showing every sin he tries to hide. At first, I admired Gray's charm and freedom. But as the story went on, I felt uneasy – his beauty has become a prison. When he tries to destroy the ugly portrait, he is really trying to destroy his guilt.

Reading this, I began to see how temptation works in our time. Social media teaches us to value appearances, to hide flaws behind filters. But just like Gray's portrait, our inner selves still record everything. Wilde's story reminds me that beauty without conscience is meaningless, and that real growth comes from facing mistakes.

Fame, money and success matter, but life is not just about these things. We also need moments of true joy – reading, painting or simply thinking – that feed our souls. Wilde's novel speaks across time: True humanity lies not in staying young forever or achieving success, but in the courage to take responsibility, to feel and to change.

Question: What insights(启示) have you gained from the passage?

- (1) Don't focus on superficial beauty, we need beauty with conscience.
- (2) When we see others' perfect moments, we should maintain correct values and look through our inner selves.
- (3) Fame, money and success matter, but we also need joy. True humanity lies in the courage to take responsibility, to feel and to change.