



# BELOVED AND DORIAN GRAY



- Themes:
- Dehumanization through Slavery
- Naming Process
- Motherly Figure
- Destruction of Identity
- Men and Masculinity
- Memory of the Past
- Home
- Moral Ambiguity
- Concept of Freedom
- The Supernatural

B

**Sethe**—Sethe is the major character of the novel and belongs to the African American community. She demonstrates nobleness of her character and pride of her race and grows up as a slave child not knowing her mother's the name. She is sold and re-sold and finally reaches Sweet Home where Halle Suggs marries her. After having four children, she flees from Sweet Home to escape slavery but is tracked down by the brutal master, the Schoolteacher. To save her children from suffering, she kills her daughter, Beloved. However, when she leaves Sweet Home after winning freedom, she makes 124 in Cincinnati as her home. There, she constantly faces the ghost of Beloved which makes her two sons run away. Later, her mother-in-law Baby Suggs also comes to her, and they all live happily with tragic reminiscences of their past. By the end of the novel, she almost becomes mad but tries to start a new life with Paul D, who returns to her.

**Baby Suggs**—Though her name is Baby Suggs, she was called Whitlow by her owners. She wins freedom when her son, Halle pays for her. However, she does not understand the importance of freedom and thinks that she is too old. Later, at the 124 Cincinnati, she transforms herself into a preacher and becomes a holy lady in the community. She holds gatherings in the forest located nearby. She becomes forlorn and exhausted when Sethe kills Beloved. After a few years when Sethe's sons run away from the house, she becomes too weak and dies. She leaves an impact on Sethe as she comes to terms with life.

**Denver**—Denver is Sethe's second daughter and lives with her. She was named after a white lady, Amy Denver, who helped Sethe deliver her. That is why she always insists on stories of Amy. She was born when Sethe escapes from the North. Although she is quite young, she feels afraid and lonely when her mother is not at home. Until she was 12, she did not leave the lawn of her home in Cincinnati. Initially, she becomes highly obsessed with the presence of Beloved. However, Denver becomes highly independent and strong, supporting her mother by the end. She also understands the plight her mother has gone through.

**Beloved**—The first Beloved is the daughter of Sethe whom she kills when she is caught fleeing Sweet Home. The second Beloved is the ghost that appears at 124 in Cincinnati. The identity of the ghost remains very indefinable. She may also be a ghost of her third child, Beloved. The ghost Beloved is not only limited in language ability, but she is also very soft like a baby, and emotionally an unbalanced. Beloved also narrates mysterious stories about her past. Due to that, Sethe becomes emotional and takes care of her. However, with time, the ghost Beloved becomes highly furious, temperamental and almost self-centered. She disappears by the end of the novel when Sethe recalls her 'slave master' coming again.

**Paul D**—Paul D was also a slave at Sweet Home. He has lived with Sixo, Halle and two other Pauls over there. He wanders during the Civil War and also gets tortured by Schoolteacher who is very much against him due to his love for Sethe. Later, he appears at 124 in Cincinnati and lives with Sethe, but the ghost of Beloved turns against him. He tries to escape the past through his tobacco tin, but Sethe, as well as Beloved, force him to confront his past. He leaves 124 but later returns when Sethe faces a mental crisis.

**Mr. Garner**—Mr. Garner, the owner of Sethe, is a minor character. He is known for his kindness towards his slaves and treated them humanely. It is also trusted his slaves do things otherwise unimaginable at any slave house like allowing them to handle guns at the expense of danger to his life. However, despite his kindness and generosity, it shows some contradictions and hypocritical attitude in the end.

**Sixo**— Six is one of the slaves at Sweet Home. He is painted in indigo colour at the beginning of the story, having markedly different features than other slaves. He is one of the slaves who speaks English and is well-versed in his mother tongue. One of his character traits is to rebel against his masters. That is why he does not like to be confined at any plantation and tries to escape as soon as he finds a chance.

- The Purpose of Art
- The Supremacy of Youth and Beauty
- The Superficial Nature of Society
- The Negative Consequences of Influence
- Morality
- Homoerotic Love
- The Indulgence of the Senses
- Duality

DG

**Alan Campbell** - Alan Campbell is a former close friend of Dorian Gray. The friendship lasted for eighteen months and ended for unknown reasons. After the split between the two men, Campbell became melancholy and gave up playing music, which had been his delight. After he murders Basil, Gray summons Campbell, who is an expert in chemistry, to dispose of the body. Campbell agrees to do it only after Gray indicates he will blackmail him if he does not cooperate. Campbell later commits suicide by shooting himself in his laboratory.

**Lord Fermor**— Lord Fermor is the uncle of Lord Henry Wotton. He is a bachelor and former diplomat who devotes himself to what the narrator describes as "the great aristocratic art of doing absolutely nothing." He informs Lord Henry about Dorian Gray's family background.

**Dorian Gray**—Dorian Gray is twenty years old when the novel begins. He is the grandson of Lord Kelso, and his mother was the beautiful Lady Margaret Devereux. Margaret married a man Lord Kelso did not approve of, and her father arranged for the man to be killed in a duel. Dorian's mother died within a year, and Dorian was raised by his grandfather. When Dorian comes of age at twenty-one, he will inherit enough money to enable him to live comfortably. In the beginning of the novel, Dorian is a bright and beautiful young man who is admired by many. He is wealthy and impressionable and quickly falls under the influence of the older Lord Henry. At this point, Dorian becomes obsessed with his youth and his beauty and begins to put this above anything else. He trades his soul so that he can live a life of pleasure and reckless abandon without the consequences affecting his beautiful complexion.

**Lord Henry Wotton** - Perhaps one of the most morally abhorrent characters of the novel, his brand of evil is far more subtle and easy to miss than Dorian's. Lord Henry is charismatic and pleasant-mannered around others. However, from the start he identifies young Dorian as someone who would be easy to manipulate. Throughout the years, he gets his entertainment from influencing and manipulating Dorian. His personal philosophy plays on the idea that one must find ways to stimulate the senses, never minding conventional morality.

**Basil Hallward** - A mild-mannered and passionate artist who, in the beginning of the novel, is obsessed with Dorian's beauty. He believes that Dorian's rare and exquisite beauty helped him to find a refreshed artistic vision. The portrait of Dorian that is completed at the start of the novel is Basil's masterpiece. Basil attempts to serve as a sort of moral compass at times for Dorian, but he is never able to get through to Dorian and winds up murdered at Dorian's hands.

**Sibyl Vane** - The beautiful and talented actress who Dorian falls in love with. Once Sibyl falls in love with Dorian, she is no longer able to act and she loses interest in acting as a career because once she experienced love, the pretend emotions of acting felt false and uncomfortable.

"Love is or it ain't. Thin love ain't love at all."  
 "You are your best thing"

"Those who find ugly meanings in beautiful things are corrupt without being charming."  
 "There is no such thing as a moral or immoral book."  
 "One would have said that there was a touch of cruelty in the mouth. It was certainly strange." (ch7)

One purpose in the book shows how individuals can slowly deteriorate because of the evil lying within themselves. The major purpose of this novel is how much power art has over others. Dark desires and forbidden pleasure are at the centre of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Interplay between art and morality. The idea of a double life – of outwardly playing a respectable role while inwardly pursuing an existence that crossed the boundaries of acceptable behaviour – is central to the plot of the novel. it can be argued that Wilde intended his book neither as a celebration of decadence nor as a fable about the perils of its excesses. As Wilde states in the preface to the novel 'There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written or badly written. That is all'.

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Ao1 Key ideas

**B** Morrison, through fiction, has made social change, a feat many others haven't been able to accomplish through nonfiction writing and activism. Beloved "helped us think about U.S. history in an entirely different way," Davis said, and Morrison's specificity—including her elegantly crafted characters—helped change "the abstractness of the portrayal of slavery.... It became possible to humanize slavery, to remember that the system of slavery did not destroy the humanity of those whom it enslaved." Tackles the 'National amnesia': Beloved explores the physical, emotional, and spiritual devastation wrought by slavery, a devastation that continues to haunt those characters who are former slaves even in freedom. The erosion of the self emerges as a *central theme*. Longing for love and to be nurtured extends across life and death. To Sethe the darkness of this world far outweighed anything on the other side. writing a memorial to slavery. We can figure out that she is writing a book of healing - making us look directly at extensive horrors related to slavery in order to have us, the reader, confront it and deal with it, in order to not forget about it. The 'Unspeakable thoughts unspoken'

sharp and witty one-liners to elaborate, sensuous passages - rhythm & tone sensory input  
Tone—judgemental  
Gothic fiction  
Ends, like it begins, with the painting.  
Symbolism  
Two settings represent Dorian's two sides  
Duality  
Epigraph—Readers see what they want to see in the novel, so they only have themselves to blame if they find it scandalous  
Allegory  
Third-person omniscient  
3 clear plot points—linear  
fin-de-siècle

Ao2 craft

Extra Diegetic narration

Prose poetry  
not a linear tale - Analepsis  
Two temporal planes  
Fragments/shattered pieces  
Omniscient, limited omniscient and first person, Perspective of a white man  
Epigraph and epilogue  
Monologues  
Verse and stream of consciousness  
Biblical allusions  
Symbolism  
Syntax—compound noun structures  
Magical realism  
Allegory

B

Born 1854 Dublin. Born when Ireland was still recovering from the great famine.

Married Constance Lloyd, they shared an enthusiasm for the suffragette movement (she was part of the Rational Dress Society, against corsets).

1886 met first male lover Robert Ross.

Father died and the family was seriously in debt.

Fell in Love with 'Bosie' (Lord Alfred Douglas) he was manipulative and unstable, preventing Wilde from working.

Bosie and Wilde had affairs with other men whilst together. But it was Bosie's carelessness that doomed Wilde. Wilde was blackmailed when someone found a love note in a cast-off suit of Bosie's. Wilde resolved it quickly.

Wilde tried to break with him, but Queensberry's son committed suicide 1894. Madened by grief, Queensberry made a scapegoat of Wilde, sending an insulting card to Wilde's club. Wilde was ambivalent about suing for libel. Queensbury pleaded justification. His detectives located several of Wilde's lovers so Bosie did not have to appear in court. Wilde went to jail for 2 years, with hard labour.

Wilde wandered Europe before dying of Cerebral Meningitis.

Wilde's era was named the Fin de Siecle, meaning the end of a century.

1886 Psychopathia Sexualis defined homosexuality. He thought of homosexuals as not criminals but victims of hereditary or upbringing. Made homosexuality an identity.

Links between crime and sexuality gave rise to new legislation.

1870's Decadents appeared. School of writers and artists who focused on the artificial urban rather than the natural. They believed you should embrace the intensity of experience for its own sake. Aesthetics in a reaction against English Prudery. It believed in art for the sake of art, without having a moral/social purpose. Biggest decadent was J.K Huysman's *A Rebours* (against nature) (1884) book that corrupts Dorian Gray. About a man who embraces pleasure in all forms. He carries the decadent love of synaesthesia (Dorian's obsession with perfume). He becomes diseased and afraid of religion.

When *The Picture of Dorian Gray* was first published in Lippincott's Monthly Magazine in 1890, it was decried as immoral. In revising the text the following year, Wilde included a preface, which serves as a useful explanation of his philosophy of art.

A03 Context

Toni Morrison is a Black American born 1931, Ohio.

She grew up during the depression.

Both sets of her grandparents moved North from the South. Her father George, was originally from Georgia and knew the reality of racial violence. Her Mother, Ramah, took humiliating jobs to pay for her daughter's schooling. Toni's parents disagreed about white people, her father said they would never improve, but her mother was optimistic. 1955 she received a master's degree from Cornell University.

She has a passion for black history and culture, teaching African-American literature at Yale.

Beloved was published 1987. She blends realism and fantasy, which is rooted in Black folk law and her family's tradition of story-telling.

Her work is steeped in popular black culture. The juxtapositions of joy pain, laughter sadness, love and death are found in Jazz, blues and spiritual. These same themes were explored by black story-tellers.

In the 1970's Women's rights movements and the Black Rights movement intersected, and black women began writing about their experiences of autobiography and female history. Morrison's purpose is to ensure the history of slavery is not forgotten.

Beloved begins in 1873.

Focuses on the fact slave mothers sometimes killed their children rather than allow them to become slaves.

Margret Garner was one, she appears in the Black book, a series of newspaper clippers/photo's etc about the forgotten black women and men of America

Early 17th century, a regular slave trade between Africa and English North American colonies began.

Merchant shippers of New York and New England imported slaves for planters of Maryland, Virginia and the Carolinas. By 1670 all Africans in the colonies were defined as slaves.

Came under criticism in 18th century, Anti-slavery societies in England and France emerged but there was little support in the US. The invention of cotton Gin caused a boom in 1793 of cotton production and hence slaves. The Transatlantic trade diminished, so slave owners bred. Virginia had great success in this, exporting 6,000 slaves.

1860 slave population was 3 million. 19th century religious and secular politicians opposed slavery once more. Pro-abolitionist North and Pro-slavery South had great conflict. American civil war 1861-1865.

Under the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, slavery was abolished (1865). There was radical readjustment after the civil war. Many blacks were granted land money.

1866 KKK emerged, angry whites who opposed the taking of what they thought was theirs.

Between 1882-1903 2,000 blacks were lynched. Attitudes that allowed slavery to exist resurfaced in the 50's, and persist today in extreme right-wing groups.

B