



The Artist

 'I have put too much of
myself into this painting.' 

1

Through the open windows of the room came the rich scent of summer flowers. Lord Henry Wotton lay back in his chair and smoked his cigarette. Beyond the soft sounds of the garden he could just hear the noise of London.

In the centre of the room there was a portrait of a very beautiful young man, and in front of it stood the artist himself, Basil Hallward.

'It's your best work, Basil, the best portrait that you've ever painted,' said Lord Henry lazily. 'You must send it to the best art gallery in London.'

'No,' Basil said slowly. 'No, I won't send it anywhere.'

Lord Henry was surprised. 'But my dear Basil, why not?' he asked. 'What strange people you artists are! You want to be famous, but then you're not happy when you *are* famous. It's bad when people talk about you – but it's much worse when they *don't* talk about you.'

'I know you'll laugh at me,' replied Basil, 'but I can't exhibit the picture in an art gallery. I've put too much of myself into it.'

Lord Henry laughed. 'Too much of yourself into it! You don't look like him at all. He has a fair and beautiful face. And you – well, you look intelligent, of course, but with your



*'It's the best portrait that you've ever painted,'
said Lord Henry.*

ACTIVITIES

After Reading

- 1 Complete this conversation between James Vane and his mother, after his return from Australia. Use as many words as you like.

JAMES VANE: What really happened to Sybil, mother?

MRS VANE: I told you in my letter. _____.

JAMES VANE: But why did she kill herself? It was because of that man, wasn't it?

MRS VANE: Yes, _____.

JAMES VANE: When did this happen?

MRS VANE: _____.

JAMES VANE: So soon! What did he do to her? Do you know?

MRS VANE: Yes, I do. She left me a note. He _____.

JAMES VANE: I knew that he was dangerous, but why did he get tired of her so quickly?

MRS VANE: He said _____.

JAMES VANE: So she had nothing to live for! Well, I promise I won't rest until I've killed him. He is an evil man. What was his name?

MRS VANE: I don't know. But _____.

JAMES VANE: Well, I'll look for this 'Prince Charming' and make him sorry that he destroyed my sister.

MRS VANE: Oh, James, _____.

JAMES VANE: Don't worry, mother. I've got a gun.