

The Picture of Dorian Gray

The Preface

The artist is the creator of beautiful things.

To reveal art and conceal the artist is art's aim.

The critic is he who can translate into another manner or a new material his impression of beautiful things.

The highest, as the lowest, form of criticism is a mode of autobiography.

Those who find ugly meanings in beautiful things are corrupt without being charming. This is a fault.

Those who find beautiful meanings in beautiful things are the cultivated. For these there is hope. They are the elect to whom beautiful things mean only Beauty.

There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written, or badly written. That is all.

The nineteenth-century dislike of Realism is the rage of Caliban seeing his own face in a glass.

The nineteenth-century dislike of Romanticism is the rage of Caliban not seeing his own face in a glass.

The moral life of man forms part of the subject matter of the artist, but the morality of art consists in the perfect use of an imperfect medium.

No artist desires to prove anything. Even things that are true can be proved.

p.6

No artist has ethical sympathies. An ethical sympathy in an artist is an unpardonable mannerism of style.

No artist is ever morbid. The artist can express everything.

Thought and language are to the artist instruments of an art.

Vice and virtue are to the artist materials for an art.

From the point of view of form, the type of all the arts is the art of the musician. From the point of view of feeling, the actor's craft is the type.

All art is at once surface and symbol.

Those who go beneath the surface do so at their peril.

Those who read the symbol do so at their peril.

It is the spectator, and not life, that art really mirrors.

Diversity of opinion about a work of art shows that the work is new, complex, and vital.

When critics disagree the artist is in accord with himself.

We can forgive a man for making a useful thing as long as he does not admire it. The only excuse for making a useless thing is that one admires it intensely.

All art is quite useless.

Oscar Wilde.

Caliban

In Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, the character precisely opposed to the airy sprite Ariel is Caliban, half man and half brute, condensed and gross in feeling, he has the dawning of understanding without reason or the moral sense, he shows the approach of the brutes to the mental powers of man. He is malicious and cowardly and false; yet different from Shakespeare's merely vulgar knaves. He is rude but not vulgar; he always speaks in verse. He has a vocabulary of his own.

Caliban is a fictional character in William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, a deformed servant to Prospero. He is the son of a witch, Sycorax, whom Prospero defeated. Prospero explains his harsh treatment of Caliban by describing how the creature, after initially having been taken into Prospero's family, had lusted after his daughter, Miranda. In his resentment, Caliban plots with the shipwrecked sailors to kill Prospero and become lord of the island, but is ultimately foiled. In recent times, Caliban has been used as a symbol by colonial freedom fighters, especially in the West Indies, who have seen him as an aboriginal inhabitant deprived of his land by European colonizers.

Although portrayed as a brutal savage, it is significant that Caliban is given one of the most moving speeches in the entire play:

Be not afeard; the isle is full of noises,
Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not.
Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
Will hum about mine ears, and sometime voices
That, if I then had waked after long sleep,
Will make me sleep again: and then, in dreaming,
The clouds methought would open and show riches
Ready to drop upon me that, when I waked,
I cried to dream again.
-Act 3, Scene 2

The name "Caliban" is related to "cannibal" and "Carib".