

London, 1867. Dorian Gray is heir to a title and their family's estate, but they've never been given the chance to decide whether that's actually what they want out of life. Forcibly estranged from their father by their manipulative grandfather, Dorian feels trapped in the life that has been decided for them.

Then one night they sneak out of their grandfather's house and meet a sweet and talented young painter named Basil, who immediately recognizes Dorian as his new muse. They agree to sit for Basil for a portrait, and Dorian is struck by the beauty and depth that Basil paints into their likeness—and they dare to begin hoping there might be more to life than being their grandfather's perfect, empty-headed heir.

Dorian is further elated when Basil introduces them to the world of molly houses and drag performers—they've never seen such a joyful variety of humanity and gender expression. But as the barrier between the London they know and the one they're discovering begins to crumble, Dorian must face the fact that freedom and safety do not come hand in hand.

The aftermath of this realization pulls Dorian into a terrible downward spiral, torn between guilt over their own actions and hatred for the suffocating expectations of society. They push away those closest to them, surrounding themselves instead with vapid courtiers and decadent socialites. And as Dorian's spiral of self-loathing deepens, something strange happens—Basil's portrait of them begins to change. Their smile becomes a little sharper, the glint in their eyes a little colder.

Dorian will have to choose—either embrace the wickedness within and become what they were always expected to be, or dare to try for something far more fragile and dangerous: a life of their own making.

Elle Grenier is an author of young adult books and a former theater kid who lives in British Columbia on traditional Pocomtuc land with their fiancée and their three cats. They started writing at eight years old and never stopped, now striving to write the books they would've wanted to read in their teenage years. Elle studied English literature at the University of Toronto and started their master's before deciding to focus their attention on writing instead. When they aren't writing, you can probably find Elle rewatching the same three shows online, playing around with Taylor Swift covers on their lyre, or lying by the nearest body of water. When they are writing, you'll likely see them downing several cups of coffee next to a Shakespeare plush for motivation. *This Wretched Beauty: A Dorian Gray Remix* is their debut novel.

READ BY JENET LE LACHEUR



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