

When the Marquess of Queensberry left his calling card at the Albemarle Club in February 1895, it bore only his name and five words: "For Oscar Wilde, posing sodomite." The most celebrated playwright of his day famously sued for libel, which led to his arrest, criminal prosecution, and ultimately prison. From then on, his gilded existence spiraled into public disgrace, humiliation, and an early death.

But what if he had simply ignored the insult? What direction might his life have taken? This is the premise of John Boyne's extraordinary new novel. Rather than dying in penury in Paris at age forty-six, what if Wilde had lived to bear witness to the momentous events and cataclysmic changes of the first part of the twentieth century, and even influence some of them? What if the second half of his life were as dramatic, tumultuous, and exhilarating as the first?

In imagining the life that Oscar Wilde never had, John Boyne has written one of the great what-if stories of modern literature, giving the iconic Anglo-Irish poet and playwright a fresh new voice and the opportunity to take an entirely different path.

JOHN BOYNE is the author of *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*, *The Heart's Invisible Furies*, and *A Ladder to the Sky*, among others. His most recent novel, *The Elements*, won both the Prix Femina Roman Étranger and the Prix du Roman FNAC in France. He lives in Dublin.

Read by Roy McMillan



Runtime: 19h. 7m. • Unabridged

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