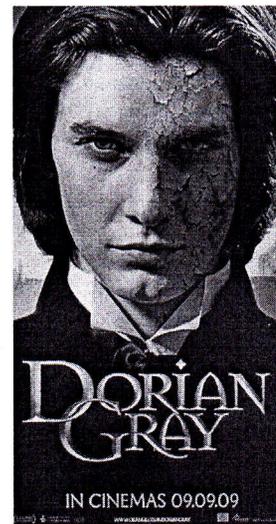


Read the text and answer the questions.

Oscar Wilde

Oscar Wilde's spectacular fall from grace is one of the best-known and most tragic stories in the history of literature. Born in Dublin in 1854, the son of an eye surgeon and a well-known poet, Wilde graduated from Oxford in 1878 and moved to London where he rapidly became a celebrity and the most prominent figure in the Aesthetic movement¹. He wrote not only plays for the theatre but also essays, novels², short stories³ and poems.



He is probably most famous for his scandalously successful novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, about a handsome young man who retained⁴ his beauty while the marks of his sins⁵ showed only on his painted portrait. This novel has been made into several films and TV series. Most recently this theme has been used in popular TV series *Penny Dreadful*.

In 1884, Wilde married Constance Lloyd and moved into the house in Tite Street, Chelsea. By the mid-1890s he was the feted author of epigrammatic comedies like *Lady Windermere's Fan* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*. But in 1895 something unfortunate happened. The Marquess⁶ of Queensberry didn't like Wilde's friendship with his son Lord Alfred Douglas. He decided to send a note addressed to Wilde, "posing as a Sodomite⁷." Unwisely, Wilde decided to sue for libel⁸ and set in motion a sequence of events that ended with him prosecuted⁹ and imprisoned¹⁰ for homosexuality.

After his release from prison Wilde was a broken man and he died in exile in Paris in 1900. Stories of his last words emphasise that he retained his wit to the end. Seriously ill in a cheap Paris hotel room he is reputed to have said, "This wall-paper will be the death of me - one of us will have to go".

¹ movement- hnutie/ literárny smer

² novel – román

³ short story- poviedka

⁴ retain- zachovať

⁵ sin- hriech

⁶ Marquess- markíz (šľachtický titul)

⁷ Sodomite – old fashioned word for a homosexual man

⁸ sue for libel – súdiť sa pre urážku na cti

⁹ prosecute – súdne stíhanie

¹⁰ imprison - uväzniť