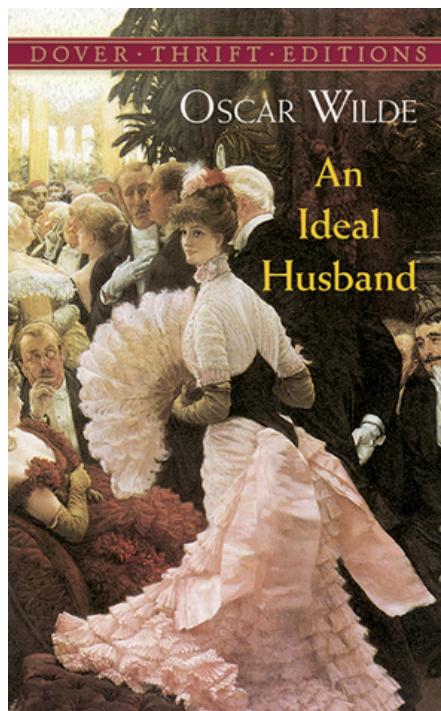




An Ideal Husband

Oscar Wilde

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Although Oscar Wilde (1854–1900) created a wide range of poetry, essays, and fairy tales (and one novel) in his brief, tragic life, he is perhaps best known as a dramatist. His witty, clever drama, populated by brilliant talkers skilled in the art of riposte and paradox, are still staples of the theatrical repertoire.

An Ideal Husband revolves around a blackmail scheme that forces a married couple to reexamine their moral standards — providing, along the way, a wry commentary on the rarity of politicians who can claim to be ethically pure. A supporting cast of young lovers, society matrons, an overbearing father, and a formidable femme fatale continually exchange sparkling repartee, keeping the play moving at a lively pace.

Like most of Wilde's plays, this scintillating drawing-room comedy is wise, well-constructed, and deeply satisfying. An instant success at its 1895 debut, the play continues to delight audiences over one hundred years later. *An Ideal Husband* is a must-read for Wilde fans, students of English literature, and anyone delighted by wit, urbanity, and timeless sophistication.

An Ideal Husband Details

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From Reader Review An Ideal Husband for online ebook

Connie says

Manipulative Mrs Cheveley tries to blackmail Sir Robert Chiltern for a mistake he made as a young man. When his wife finds out, she cannot accept the fact that her husband has imperfections. Lady Chiltern had put him on a pedestal, but no man can be totally righteous. The play has some moments of villainy, levity, and misinterpreted events that lighten the serious themes of reputation, marriage, and forgiveness. The roles of men and women reflect the values of Victorian society.

Oscar Wilde is very talented at writing witty banter so reading the play was enjoyable, although a bit dated from a 21st Century viewpoint. It would be wonderful to see the play on stage, especially with the right actors playing the juicy roles of the evil Mrs Cheveley and the dandy Lord Goring.

Steven Godin says

The first positive thing I can say about Wilde's 'An Ideal Husband' is that it includes such grand descriptive details that for the most part, I could almost hear an imaginary audience praising him under their breaths. This play, first performed in 1899, was a joyous and light read, full of fancy frocks and plush behaviour but also weighed down with the problem of misogyny, with several references to male superiority. It was a time when being a woman came with many pitfalls, I felt for them back then, sadly still do now, in the 21st century. To think out there, right now, they still have to put up with this shit. Deplorable!. Anyway, onto the play...

In essence, this is a keyhole view of a high society grappling with the notions of what a marriage stands for, featuring deep characters that feel truly believable, it opens with a dinner party held in London's fashionable Grosvenor Square by House of Commons member Sir Robert Chiltern, the gathering includes his wife, Gertrude, friend Lord Goring and others. There is a blackmail incident, involving a Mrs Cheveley, who knows some dodgy things about Sir Robert's past to do with a Cabinet secret. A problematic situation takes shape. For Lady Chiltern, their marriage is predicated on her having an "ideal husband"—that is, a model spouse in both private and public life that she can worship. Robert has a dilemma, does he remain truthful to his wife, and tell of his guilt?.

Poor old Robert is eventually exposed by Mrs Cheveley, his wife then denounces her husband and refuses to forgive him. From here on in, cue womanizing, political corruption, the resurfacing of a diamond brooch that comes into play, complications arising from a note found leading to thoughts of an affair , plus a Vengeful act out to destroy. But fear not, there is happy ending!.

Many of the themes were influenced by the situation Wilde found himself in during the early 1890s, regarding his own fears and stressing the need to be forgiven of past sins, and the irrationality of ruining lives of great value to society because of people's hypocritical reactions to those sins. Also, the position of women in society was criticised by theatre analysers as overt sexism, easy to see why, after it's disclosed "A man's life is of more value than a woman's." There is also an expression of anti-upper class sentiments, on behalf of most of the characters, where the overall portrayal displays an attitude of hypocrisy and strict observance of silly little rules that needn't apply.

A humorous read it was, but still carried with it serious undertones. No doubts this worked wonders on the stage. Very good.

El says

(Read as part of the Complete Works of Oscar Wilde.)

One of my bigger problems in life is the inability to read certain texts I know have been turned into movies starring Rupert Everett and *not* picture him as the star as I read. It's Rupert Everett 24/7 in my head. It's to the point now where even the Oscar Wilde plays I read that weren't turned into Rupert Everett movies are unable to be read without imagining Rupert Everett. I'm broken inside!

However, if you've seen the movie and you've read this play, you'll see there are some differences. The movie doesn't even mention the brooch!

I'm slowly running out of things to say about Wilde as I read him. The situations he wrote about are all pretty similar (at least so I've noticed thus far), but it doesn't make them any less enjoyable to read. He wrote wicked scandals; I wonder how much he drew from personal experience when writing these plays - this one in particular.

Interestingly, it was during this play's run that Wilde was arrested for being gay and, according to Wikipedia, the actors in the play were used in the trial as witnesses against him. Ouch.

I can't help but love Wilde's characters, even the shitty ones. You know they're nasty but you can't help it since they're so... quippy.

"But it is after seven, father, and my doctor says I must not have any serious conversation after seven. It makes me talk in my sleep."

"LORD CAVERSHAM: And it is high time for you to get married. You are thirty-four years of age, sir.

LORD GORING: Yes, father, but I only admit to thirty-two -- thirty-one and a half when I have a really good buttonhole. This buttonhold is not... trivial enough."

Emily Snyder says

When the name "Oscar Wilde" is brought into company, most people immediately think of "The Importance of Being Earnest," or "That fellow who was so witty," or "Oh, wasn't he really, really gay?"

What most people DON'T seem to think of is that Wilde's work was far from trifling (Earnest), more than witty, and often centered quite firmly around the difficulties of heterosexual relationships.

"An Ideal Husband" is a comedy. It's important to remember that when watching recent versions which like to make it too arch AND simultaneously too sinister. To read the play, one can enjoy all the witticisms and bon mots for which Wilde is justly famous. But beneath that clever exterior is more than a child in a handbasket (a la Earnest) but the difficulties, obligations, and complications with being a MAN in society.

Like Wilde's best work (Salome, Dorian Grey, etc.) the hero in "An Ideal Husband" is no saint, although he's perceived as one. And his youthful demons come back to haunt him in the form of blackmail. However, Sir Robert Chilton is a respected politician, a public figure whose whole persona is based around integrity. MORE, though - since we do not travel to Parliament with him, Oscar Wilde makes Robert a seeming paragon at home: a foil to his foppish friend, supporter of his sister-in-law, nearly worshipped by his wife.

Perfection is too much to bear. After trying to hide his past from his wife, Robert is forced by Lady Chilton to reveal the truth of his own shameful past. One cannot help but consider Wilde's own domesticity, his public persona - and what heartbreaking conversations were had behind closed doors. In one particularly moving speech, Robert begs his wife to allow him to be human, to be imperfect, and to be loved nonetheless. BUT - and here's what people forget about Wilde, presuming him to be nothing but a lush, Robert also asks his wife for help to overcome his current opportunity to backslide into his former depravity.

Wilde's personal voice always comes through the clearer in such soul-searching plays as these. His is the perpetual story of the woman caught in adultery, thrust at Christ's feet, who is ultimately spared, forgiven, and rebuked. I highly recommend anyone studying Wilde's works NOT to neglect reading them, not only in conjunction with the many biographies available, but ALSO in the light of his poems which he wrote in Rome, that are particularly revealing.

What's beautiful about Wilde is that he knew how to make us cry, even in the middle of our cultivated smiles.

Anne says

THIS WAS AWESOME!!

Jen from Quebec :0) says

Awesome! I have been putting this one off for a bit, as it is a play, not a novel like I originally thought; so I got the audio to accompany my book, and it was splendid! At times full of sorrow, at times hilarious! It reminded me of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' in the way that everything gets mixed up among all the couples in the play! In the end, it is a tale of faithfulness, love, friendship and morality. Well done! "Jolly Good" AND/OR "BRILLIANT", as the Brits would say! ---Jen from Quebec :0)

Andrea (Catsos Person) is a Compulsive eBook Hoarder says

eAudio from the library

Catching The Classics Group BOTM: Short Story Selection (Though actually it is a play)

Classic Bingo 2017: B2 Classic Comedy or Satire

This is the third example of Oscar Wilde's writing for me and I really liked it.

Mia (Parentheses Enthusiast) says

Review to come when I figure out whether or not this is as ragingly sexist as I think it might be.

Tadiana ☆Night Owl? says

An Ideal Husband is an 1895 play by Oscar Wilde, his third most popular work after *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. In it Wilde explores hypocrisy, corruption, forgiveness and other themes with his trademark epigrammatic humor.

Sir Robert Chiltern, a moral, upstanding politician (pause while I take a moment to ponder whether there is such a thing), with a lovely young wife who idealizes him, turns out to have a major skeleton in his closet: Many years ago, at the start of his political career, he sold a state secret about the Suez Canal in an insider trading sort of deal, and used that money to make his fortune and jumpstart his career. Now Mrs. Cheveley, an old classmate of his wife (who she detests), turns up at a party the Chilterns are hosting, blackmailing Sir Robert into publicly supporting a fraudulent scheme to build a canal in Argentina. It's one canal for another, she tells him.

Meanwhile the Chilterns' bachelor friend, Lord Goring, is flirting with Mabel Chiltern, Sir Robert's sister.

Luckily for the frantic Sir Robert and his morally inflexible wife, Lord Goring also has some wise advice to dispense to all and sundry, along with a few other tricks up his sleeve.

An Ideal Husband isn't as hilariously witty as *The Importance of Being Earnest*, but it has a little more meat to it. There's a lesson here about how imperfect people still deserve love.

You can almost hear Wilde pleading for people to have more tolerance and forgiveness for his own still-hidden-but-beginning-to-fray gay lifestyle. But he makes his moral lesson go down fairly easy, with lots of very funny and very quotable lines.

I always pass on good advice. It is the only thing to do with it. It is never of any use to oneself.

Talks more and says less than anybody I ever met. She is made to be a public speaker.

You see, it is a very dangerous thing to listen. If one listens one may be convinced; and a man who allows himself to be convinced by an argument is a thoroughly unreasonable person.

Lord Goring: I am going to give you some good advice.

Mrs. Cheveley: Oh! pray don't. One should never give a woman anything that she can't wear in the evening.

I don't like principles, father. I prefer prejudices.

There are a few eyebrow-raising lines here as well (the worst is: "A man's life is of more value than a

woman's. It has larger issues, wider scope, greater ambitions. A woman's life revolves around curves of emotions."). It's pretty infrequent, and may just be reflection of Victorian times, though I wonder whether Oscar Wilde was just playing with his audience's expectations. But other than those couple of needle-scratch moments, this is a very amusing play that gives us some great food for thought about relationships and forgiveness.

Jasmine says

3.5 stars

This wonderful play with gorgeous lines for Lord Goring would have been a solid four star read, were it not for the last couple of pages where Wilde spoilt it for me. Lord Goring, who in my view is the strongest representative of the author's voice, fell back into a strongly conventional view of women's place, without the slightest undertone of irony:

Lord Goring: *"A man's life is of more value than a woman's. It has larger issues, wider scope, greater ambitions. A woman's life revolves in curves of emotions. It is upon lines of intellect that a man's life progresses."*(*)

Lady Chiltern: *"A man's life is of more value than a woman's. It has larger issues, wider scope, greater ambitions. Our lives revolve in curves of emotions. It is upon lines of intellect that a man's life progresses. I have just learnt this, and much else with it, from Lord Goring..."*(**)

Richard Allen Cave's explanatory notes in the Penguin Classics Edition *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *Other Plays* confirm my perception to some extent:

(*) *"The whole speech has posed problems for some of Wilde's critics because Lord Goring, whose words have until now sparkled with originality of thought and expression, seems to be offering a decidedly conventional view of woman's place within marriage (and one that even in its expression draws heavily on the writings of John Ruskin)."*

And he tries to console the modern reader:

(**) *"Feminist and socialist critics alike have taken exception to this speech which represents Lady Chiltern as a kind of puppet programmed by Lord Goring. But this is to miss the careful structuring of the change that Lady's Chiltern's character undergoes during this act..."*

Maybe I am overreacting, but after having read *Lady Windermere's Fan* and *A Woman of No Importance* which both have a slightly feminist undertone, I was not expecting this of Oscar Wilde – thus 3.5 stars, I'm afraid.

Duane says

It's a delight to read Wilde's plays, clever and witty, and by all accounts people flocked to the theater in his day to enjoy the fun. I hope a production of this one comes to my town someday, I would love to see it. Very entertaining read, right up there with *Earnest*.

Vanessa J. says

I'm going to say this for the millionth time: Oscar Wilde is a freaking genius. Everything he writes is pure gold. I love his sense of humour, and his writing. He was a great man (treated badly by the society in which he lived) and a great writer too. I wish I could let him know that.

This play was as foolish as the previous one I read, and even when I enjoyed that one more, this one was good all the same. The plot follows some particular characters that are all married or being proposed marriage. It involves some blackmailing and more witty comments about the Victorian society.

I laughed out loud with this play a lot. You would not believe how red my face was after so much laughing. Seriously, it was ridiculous. I can't even. But that's great. It says a lot about an author who wrote a comedy for people a century back that can make a teenage girl in the 21st century have so much fun with one of his works. It screams brilliant all over the way.

Anyway, I wanted to keep this review short because 1) I want *you* to experience this for yourself without me spoiling any details, and 2) because I have an enormous list of quotes.

If you have not read this, I don't know what you have been doing with your life. Read this ASAP because Wilde is, not joking, one of my favourite authors (and not only mine but of many more people too).

Now, here's the obligatory list of quotes:

LADY BASILDON: Ah! I hate being educated!

MRS. MARCHMONT: So do I. It puts one almost on a level with the commercial classes, doesn't it?

My laughter could not be contained after reading that.

Oh, I love London Society! I think it has immensely improved. It is entirely composed now of beautiful idiots and brilliant lunatics. Just what Society should be.

See why I love his sense of humour?

Questions are never indiscreet. Answers sometimes are.

I agree.

You see, it is a very dangerous thing to listen. If one listens one may be convinced; and a man who allows himself to be convinced by an argument is a thoroughly unreasonable person.

I think I read something similar to that in another book.

Oh, I like tedious, practical subjects. What I don't like are tedious, practical people.

Me neither.

Every man of ambition has to fight his century with its own weapons. What this century worships is wealth. The God of this century is wealth. To succeed one must have wealth. At all costs one must have wealth.

After more than one hundred years, this still applies to nowadays society.

I am always saying what I shouldn't say. In fact, I usually say what I really think. A great mistake nowadays. It makes one so liable to be misunderstood.

If Wilde knew how many times I have thought that...

It is not the perfect, but the imperfect, who have need of love.

Truth.

...

Told you it was an **enormous** list of quotes, didn't I?

P.S.: I've now made it my new goal to read all of his works this year. First Shakespeare, now Oscar Wilde. Here we go! And fyi, I have not finished my Shakespeare challenge yet, but who cares? I got this new obsession and I will not stay calm until I read all of Wilde's books.

Missy J says

Very entertaining, witty and fun to read! Oscar Wilde in his true element!

This play revolves around the themes of personal and public honor, forgiveness, society's perception of success, gender relations, blackmail, reputation and political corruption. In less than 80 pages, the reader gets a glimpse into late 19th century London high society.

Sir Robert Chiltern and his wife Lady Chiltern are hosting a dinner party when an unexpected guest arrives, Lady Cheveley. The ladies at the party immediately take a dislike to Lady Cheveley. Much to Sir Robert's chagrin, Lady Cheveley knows more about him and his past than his own wife Lady Chiltern. His relationship with his wife is put to the test, as well as his untarnished career. How will it all end up?

For a play this was a joy to read. Wilde's characters are funny and charismatic. I couldn't help but think that Oscar Wilde himself was hiding behind the character of Lord Goring. Prior to this play, I've only read The Picture of Dorian Gray. I think I should read more Oscar Wilde, because there are a lot of interesting observations of society hidden in the characters' conversations and behaviors.

One interesting idea presented in this play is how humans tend to put other humans, especially those most dear to them on a pedestal. Lady Chiltern idolized her husband's career and the reputation he held in society. Thus, he didn't want to shatter her lovey-dovey perception of him.

Highly recommend this book!

Piyanjie says

This is my first Oscar Wild and what a great read it was! I loved his wit, sarcasm and humor. I also liked his realistic observance of humans and his exposure of human follies in the face of power and wealth. He exposes both the black and white sides of ambition, stressing on the length one would be driven under its spell. There is also a severe mockery on the society for idolizing men (and also women) as perfect and Wild shows expressively that no human is without fault. And he also talks of the importance of accepting the faults and forgiving, probably in reference to himself.

Overall a brilliant play and I enjoyed it thoroughly. And I'm certain that my "Wilde" journey has just begun.

Sara says

While An Ideal Husband is typical Wilde in many ways, it is not Wilde at his best. Both Lady Windemere's Fan and The Importance of Being Ernest eclipse it. Still, great fun and charged with the kind of wit one expects from Wilde.

There is a play upon role reversal that is hilarious, as it is the woman who puts the man upon a pedestal and then knocks him off. There are the usual high-jinks with letters that come into the wrong hands and a ludicrous, but quite nifty, foiling of the primary villain. In fact, it has every single element that you come to expect and adore in a Wilde production. At the same time, it does manage to deal with at least one very serious issue...that of the ideal. To expect that any person can be ideal and flawless is to set one's self up for disaster.

One thing that struck me was the way Wilde wrote his stage directions. For each person as they enter the scene, he describes the type of art piece they would resemble. He had every physical trait and mannerism in his mind as he crafted these characters. I would love to see this play acted. I'm guessing it could be

appreciated at one-step higher level seen on stage.

Edlira Dibrani says

I LOVE READING OSCAR WILDE'S BOOKS.

This one is actually amazing <3 I quite enjoy reading his books. And this was beyond amazing.

``Mrs.Cheveley:Ah! the strength of women comes from the fact that psychology cannot explain us. Men can be analysed, women . . . merely adored.``

``Lord Goring: I love talking about nothing, father. It is the only thing I know anything about.``

``Lord Goring: Everything is dangerous, my dear fellow. If it wasn't so, life wouldn't be worth living.``

``Lady Chiltern: And how I worshipped you! You were to me something apart from common life, a thing pure, noble, honest, without stain. The world seemed to me finer because you were in it, and goodness more real because you lived. And now-- oh, when I think that I made of a man like you my ideal! the ideal of my life!``

``Lord Goring: To love oneself is the beginning of a life long romance.``

``Mrs.Cheveley: Oh, there is only one real tragedy in a woman's life. The fact that her past is always her lover, and her future invariably her husband.``

And my favorite from them all :::

IT IS NOT THE PERFECT, BUT THE IMPERFECT, WHO HAVE NEED OF LOVE.

Vivian says

“Ah! I prefer pluck. It is not so common, nowadays, as genius is.”

Witty and charming, assuming you ignore some really dreadful and outdated sexist concepts. Those I could stab in the eye, but Lord Goring and Lady Mabel's repartees were delightfully nonsensical. While it's not *The Importance of Being Earnest*, it's still a nice diversion.

Lord Goring: [Triumphantly.] No; that was a flash of genius.

Mabel Chiltern: Your first.

Lord Goring: [With determination.] My last.

Stabby, stabby:

"A man's life is of more value than a woman's. It has larger issues, wider scope, greater ambitions. A woman's life revolves in curves of emotions."

The theme of unrealistic expectations that we place on our intimates, the burden of judgement instead of forgiveness, and ease in which miscommunication can blossom wildly out of control are all well done. That said, I'll be absolutely judgmental and unforgiving: I need better quality friends because while I have the occasional engaging word play for the most part it seems everyone's forgotten the art of conversation. It's not moaning and whining about everything. Life updates are good and have a place, but aim higher. Amuse me. Otherwise, why am I bothering.

"My prizes came a little later on in life. I don't think any of them were for good conduct."

Soumen Daschoudhury says

I have been grinning all through the reading of this play! If there is a definition of satire, this has to be it (forgive me my ignorance of not having read more of this kind). I have always respected sarcasm because it is one of the wittiest forms of intelligence and if I may take the liberty to say so, a remedy to the plain and dull way of general life. And Oscar Wilde immerses you in it, completely, and you would rather choke on the drollness of his language than struggle to breathe the unembellished procedural air above. His extravagant descriptions are a celebration of words.

"Mabel Chiltern is a perfect example of prettiness, the apple-bosom type. She has all the fragrance and freedom of a flower. There is ripple after ripple of sunlight in her hair, and the little mouth, with its parted lips, is expectant, like the mouth of a child. She has the fascinating tyranny of youth, and the astonishing courage of innocence. To sane people she is not reminiscent of any work of art. But she is really like a Tanagra statuette, and would be rather annoyed if she were told so."

Oh and there is a plot too; of deceit, of blackmailing! Sir Robert Chiltern is one of the richest and most respected gentlemen, of considerably high stature in the London society and an unblemished eminent individual in the political circle so much so to be a proposed member of the Parliament. Yet, his reputation, his entire political career, his future and more importantly the undying love and respect of his wife vacillates on the thinnest of threads orchestrated by the guileful Mrs.Cheveley. She harbors in her breast, a devastating secret of which the society is yet to be educated. So, would Sir Robert Chiltern hold his fort of honor and see his life wasted or would he yield in to the foxy scheme of Mrs.Cheveley – only if things were so easy!

"Sir Robert Chiltern: To attempt to classify you, Mrs. Cheveley, would be an impertinence. But may I ask, at heart, are you an optimist or a pessimist? Those seem to be the only two fashionable religions left to us nowadays."

Enter Lord Goring, a charming dandy of great fortune who is equally reputable but for his unmistakable competence in his indolence and unconcern; for him a matter of pride. Ladies are beguiled by his presence in spite of his glorified love for himself; his father's tongue for him is not so eloquent though. His love for Mabel Chiltern, Sir Robert's sister is undisclosed to her though her's for him is loud and prominent.

"Lord Goring: You see, Phipps, Fashion is what one wears oneself. What is unfashionable is what other people wear. Just as vulgarity is simply the conduct of other people. To love oneself is the beginning of a life time romance, Phipps."

Sir Robert Chiltern considers him a dear and trustworthy friend and pours his heart out on his mystifying

dilemma. What follows is a comical Shakespearean circus of confusion which would be welcomingly applauded on a real stage – comical for the readers, tragic for the characters.

Oscar Wilde is a master of wit. Reading ‘An Ideal Husband’ brings to life a forgotten era of Lords and Viscounts, of long flowing skirts, uncomfortable layers of clothing, of ornate bonnets, of unreal wigs, the affectation of verbal soliloquies, the silverware and the annoying docility to indignation among others. For our generation and the one’s arriving, this polished multitude is or would be more incredible than the speaking lion from the Chronicles of Narnia.

I could only try to imagine being teary from the sporadic bursts of laughter if I ever had the following kind of conversation with my father, and my father? He would only be assured that after all, I am a lunatic.

“Lord Caversham: Want to have a serious conversation with you, sir.

Lord Goring: My dear father! At this hour?

Lord Caversham: Well, sir, it is only ten o’clock. What is your objection to the hour? I think the hour is an admirable hour!

Lord Goring: Well, the fact is, father, this is not my day for talking seriously. I am very sorry, but it is not my day.

Lord Caversham: What do you mean, sir?

Lord Goring: During the Season, father, I only talk seriously on the first Tuesday in every month, from four to seven.

Lord Caversham: Well, make it Tuesday, sir, make it Tuesday.

Lord Goring: But it is after seven, father, and my doctor says I must not have any serious conversation after seven. It makes me talk in my sleep.

Lord Caversham: Talk in your sleep, sir? What does that matter? You are not married.”

Dagio_maya says

“LORD CAVERSHAM E se non sarete un marito ideale per questa signorina, vi lascerò senza il becco di un quattrino.

MABEL CHILTERN Un marito ideale! No, non credo mi piacerebbe. Sembra una cosa dell’aldilà.

LORD CAVERSHAM E come volete che sia, allora, mia cara?

MABEL CHILTERN Può essere come gli pare. Tutto quel che voglio io è essere... essere... oh, una vera moglie per lui.”

Commedia in quattro atti del 1895.

Il sipario si apre nel bel mezzo di un ricevimento in casa del sottosegretario al Ministero degli Esteri: Sir Robert Chiltern, un uomo ricco e potente che la moglie Gertrude definisce *“un marito ideale”* per aver

costruito la propria fortuna con la forza dell'onestà.

Il quadro idilliaco coniugale viene, tuttavia, disturbato dall'arrivo di Lady Cheveley, donna tanto affascinante quanto scaltra e perfida. La sua malvagia avidità la porta a ricattare Sir Robert Chiltern che non è poi tanto immacolato come la moglie pensa.

Tra loro un personaggio che rispecchia in modo palese Wilde stesso e il dandismo:

Lord Goring , *un impeccabile dandy* che dimostra doti da filosofo e fa da perno risolutivo di tutto l'intreccio (*" È il primo filosofo ben vestito della storia del pensiero "*)

La commedia è assolutamente piacevole nel suo riuscire a mantenere un saldo equilibrio tra la leggerezza della battuta comica e la profondità dei temi richiamati.

Wilde dimostra di non essere indifferente alla bellezza estetica femminile ma è altrettanto categorico nel suo assegnarle un ruolo ben determinato.

C'è freschezza nel saper affrontare una tematica sempre attuale (una moda che non passa mai!) come quella della corruzione politica ma ci sono anche macchie di muffa e un'incapacità (mancanza di volontà...) nel disancorarsi da retaggi maschilisti tipici dell'età vittoriana.

Eppure chi se non Wilde puntava l'indice verso i moralismi e la falsità del pensiero puritano?

Accanto alla denuncia di ciò che è poco sano nel mondo politico si afferma che se c'è una colpa nei matrimoni che falliscono è tutta femminile.

Le donne sono colpevoli di costruire l'immagine dell'uomo ideale: innalzano altarini dove depongono il povero consorte e ne fanno un simulacro ipocrita.

Così a Lord Goring sono affidate asserzioni come queste:

" La vita di un uomo ha più valore di quella di una donna. Affronta questioni più importanti, imprese di vasta portata; ha ambizioni più alte. La vita di una donna si avvolge e riavvolge nelle curve delle emozioni. Invece, è lungo le linee rette dell'intelletto che procede la vita di un uomo. Non fate un errore terribile, Lady Chiltern. Una donna che riesce a conservare l'amore di un uomo, e che ricambia il suo amore, ha fatto tutto ciò che il mondo vuole dalle donne, o dovrebbe volere da loro. "

Dunque donne siate belle e affascinanti e chinate la testa...

Concetti odiosi espressi in maniera assolutamente adorabile.

Kenny says

Review to follow ~~ I loved the wit and charm of this work.
