

# BOOK THOUGHTS

BATCH 26  
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1. OLIVE AGAIN - ELIZABETH STROUT
2. THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY - OSCAR WILDE

BLUE = MEMOIR OR BIOGRAPHICAL

BLACK = FICTION

DARK RED = EDUCATIONAL

PURPLE = ESSAY OR STORIES

ORANGE = POETRY

## OLIVE AGAIN

ELIZABETH STROUT



*Strout is a phantasmagorical writer...*

*How did the book make me feel/think?*

I picked up Olive Again because Lucy By The Sea by Elizabeth Strout was my favourite read of 2022.

I was unaware this was the continuing story of Olive Kitteridge. It didn't matter. I don't think it would matter if it was the seventh book in the series. It stands alone.

Strout is a phantasmagorical writer, with her creation Olive being a delightfully quirky and sometimes caustic outsider, like many or most of us, who holds no punches but somehow carries a little of each of us in her soul.

We can all be caustic, but few can reveal unbounded compassion and empathy in their seemingly unapproachable demeanour.

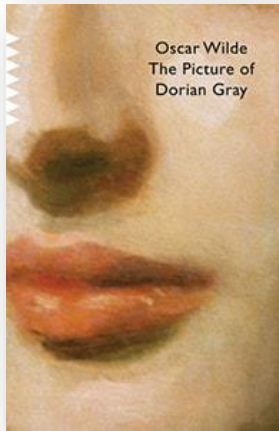
What I find Strout does deftly, like a few authors, is create characters who are polar opposites – but still, somehow, they understand each other, bringing us together in this world where forces are continually trying to tear us apart.

We need more Olive's in this world. Olive understands that a person's life belongs to them and only them and that we cannot blame someone for how they have been conditioned by the 24/7 barrage of noise we face daily.

WRITTEN: 3 March 2023

# THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY

OSCAR WILDE



*What price is too high for immortality?*

*How did the book make me feel/think?*

I'm now in my sixties.

I'm now at the stage of life where more people are moving on to whatever is next instead of attending weddings.

I'm scared. Mortality occasionally bangs at my door. A stroke. Other crap, and then other crap.

But even so, I want more life.

I'm confident I have many moons left.

I've decided I want to live till 135.

I don't think I could handle more than that because the pain of loss would eventually become too overwhelming.

At my current age, trying to understand the language those younger than me speak is impossible.

I want to stay relevant. But at what cost?

For me, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, dissects our soul; it's a psychological thriller posing the question: What price is too high for immortality?

Life plays out how life is meant to play out in all its glorious tragedy.

When I reach 135, I wonder who I'll be able to relate to?

What will replace the cell phone – most of us have attached to our right hand?

What language are twenty-year-olds speaking now?

As fascinating as the answers may be, I just want to go for a walk.

I think I may have spent too much time in the sun when I was younger.

WRITTEN: 23 February 2022