



De Profundis

Oscar Wilde , Richard Ellmann (Preface by)

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De Profundis (Latin: "from the depths") is a 50,000 word letter written by Oscar Wilde during his imprisonment in Reading Gaol, to Lord Alfred Douglas, his lover. Wilde wrote the letter between January and March 1897; he was not allowed to send it, but took it with him upon release. In it he repudiates Lord Alfred for what Wilde finally sees as his arrogance and vanity; he had not forgotten Douglas's remark, when he was ill, "When you are not on your pedestal you are not interesting." He also felt redemption and fulfillment in his ordeal, realizing that his hardship had filled the soul with the fruit of experience, however bitter it tasted at the time.

De Profundis Details

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Χριστ?να says

?να σπαρακτικ? βιβλ?ο απ? ?ναν πολ? αγαπημ?νο συγγραφ?α. Ο Wilde εδ? ξεγυμν?νει την ψυχ? του και μας δε?χνει π?ρα του π?σο ταλαντο?χος συγγραφ?ας ε?ναι, το π?σο ευα?σθητος και πολ?πλευρος ?νθρωπος ε?ναι. Ακ?μα και αν δε συμφωνε? κ?ποιος με τις απ?ψεις του ? τον τρ?πο ζω?ς του, δεν μπορε? παρ? να αφεθε? στο μαγικ? γρ?ψιμ? του και στον δαιδαλ?δη κ?σμο του, ?χι μ?νο σε αυτ? το βιβλ?ο του αλλ? σε ?λα ανεξαιρ?τως τα ?ργα του. Απλ? απολαυστικ?ς!

Mark says

In the letter Wilde wrote to his friend Robert Ross enclosing this extended essay he finishes with a beautiful image

' On the other side of the prison wall there are some poor black soot-besmirched trees which are just breaking out into buds of an almost shrill green. I know quite well what they are going through. They are finding expression '.

These lovely few sentences capture quite marvelously the thrust of this book. It is an account of Wilde's rebirth from in amidst the degradation and cruel shaming brought about by his arrest and imprisonment. From out of the depths of his sorrow and bitterness you see the pushing upwards of a soul seeking to be at rights with himself and the world. This is not an essay filled with witticisms or sharp aphorisms but it is, as he might have said at another time, bejewelled with turns of phrase and ideas which really move. His humility and genuine acknowledgement of his own responsibilities does not lessen the sense of heartbreak that you read between the lines.

' I grew careless of the lives of others. I took pleasure where it pleased me and passed on. I forgot that every little action of the common day makes or unmakes character.....i was no longer the captain of my soul, and did not know it. '.

This book is fascinating because you read Oscar Wilde's journey as he moves to a fuller and freer wisdom and the centrality of his sense of being in possession of his soul, his real self. It reminded me of that quotation from Edith Wharton in ' The touchstone' where she writes something like ' we live in our souls as if an unmapped region a small area of which we have cleared for our own habitation '. Wilde is struggling and succeeding to take possession of more and more of his mysterious hinterland. A journey with an amazingly open and honest guide.

At one point he writes of his plans for the next 18 months after his release, sadly this was all he was to have before his death but he states that ' if i may not write beautiful books, I may at least read beautiful books; and what joy can be greater '

Oscar, I couldn't have said it better myself

Panagiotis says

Δεν το θεωρ? ως μια ερωτικ? εξομολ?γηση? ως ?να μυθιστ?ρημα αλλ? ως μια βιογραφ?α των τελευτα?ων χρ?νων πριν την φυλ?κισ? του. Και ?να απ?σπασμα που μου ?ρεσε. «?νας ?νθρωπος που λαχταρ?ει να'ναι κ?τι διαφορετικ? απ? τον εαυτ? του-μ?λος του κοινοβουλ?ου ? επιτυχημ?νος χονδρ?μπορος αποικι?ν ? εξ?χων δικηγ?ρος ? δικαστ?ς ? κ?τι εξ?σου ανιαρ?- πετυχα?νει π?ντοτε, χωρ?ς εξα?ρεση να γ?νει αυτ? που θ?λει. Αυτ? ε?ναι η τιμωρ?α του. Αυτο? που θ?λουν μ?σκα, ε?ναι αναγκασμ?νοι να την φορ?νε.»

Paquita Maria Sanchez says

I am giving this a lower rating than it technically deserves, due to some of my personal beliefs that are important enough to me that I am unwilling to ignore them in a review where they are so entirely relevant to the book at hand. As a piece of writing, it is several synonyms for luscious and tragically chest-stabby. However, underneath the primary and quite applicable to post-3-decades-on-Earth-me themes of looking back on many a wasted year and regretting a lot of the selfish and short-sighted decisions one makes in a lifetime, there is Wilde's conclusions that faith in Jesus and rolling about in debilitating regret are the only ways out of the pickle that is taking stock of your life. I've been hearing that bull for as long as I can remember and from a plethora of sources such as random Southerners, television shows, extended relatives, teachers, etc, and the fact that even Oscar Wilde eventually drew such conclusions makes me feel more than a little bit doomed. So, Wilde's 5-star writing + a 0-grade on the final rounded up because the other students in class did an even worse job = 3 stars. I hope my bias is clear, and that anyone reading this review knows that if you don't find it niggling to be preached at, you would probably really enjoy this short, beautiful work.

Oh, one last thought: if you think this review is freakim' emo, you should read the book. It makes my grumble-mumbles look like glittery rainbow unicorns.

Anastasia says

(4,5*)

Σ?ντομες περ?οδοι, κοφτ?ς λ?γος, παρ?θεση ?μεσων ερωτημ?των...?λα συντελο?ν στην αποκ?λυψη της ψυχικ?ς δι?θεσης του Oscar Wide κατ? τη συγγραφ? του γρ?μματος. ?λλοτε σκεπτικ?ς, ?λλοτε θλιμμ?νος, πικραμ?νος, στοχαστικ?ς και ειρωνικ?ς. Κε?μενο με φιλοσοφικ?ς, κοινωνικ?ς και θρησκευτικ?ς προεκτ?σεις, προσφ?ρεται για περισσ?τερες απ? μ?α αναγν?σεις σε διαφορετικ?ς φ?σεις της ζω?ς μας.

"Αντ? ε?ναι ο προαι?νιο παραλογισμ?ς της ανθρ?πινης ζω?ς, να ε?σαι απ?λυτα ελε?θερος και ταυτ?χρονα νομοτελειακ? υποταγμ?νος."

"Ο π?νος ε?ναι μια απ?ραντη στιγμ? και δε μπορο?με να τον χωρ?σουμε σε διαστ?ματα. Μπορο?με μον?χα να συλλ?βουμε τις αποχρ?σεις και επαναλ?ψεις του."

ΥΓ: Δεν ?μεινα καθ?λου ικανοποιημ?νη απ? τη συγκεκριμ?νη ?κδοση (Αργονα?της). Πολλ? συντακτικ?-ορθογραφικ? λ?θη και λ?θος σημε?α στ?ξης δυσχερα?νουν σε αρκετ? σημε?α τη ρο? της αν?γνωσης. Ελπ?ζω π?ς η μετ?φραση ?ταν αρκετ? καλ? ?στε να μην αλλοιωθε? το περιεχ?μενο

και το ν?ημα του κειμ?νου. Σ?γουρα ?ταν επιστρ?ψω για μ?α ακ?μη αν?γνωση θα προτιμ?σω ?λλη ?κδοση.

Astraea says

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Trevor says

It is funny how sometimes books come at you (and when I say you, I mean me), sometimes almost in clusters. It is almost like there really is a God and He has infinite knowledge of the universe and knows just what it is that you need to be thinking about right about now, except He is curiously shy and so He doesn't like to come right out with it and tell you directly what's on His mind. So, instead, He leaves books lying around in places where you are fairly likely to trip over them and then pick them up and think about them – you know, it's been a while since I read a book about someone rotting away in prison, I ought to read this...

Except, it hasn't been a while since I did anything of the sort. Only the other week I was reading another perfectly good book written by a man who was rotting away in a perfectly good prison and that book also had him thinking about the consolation given to him by philosophy. This book isn't too different from that one (*The Consolation of Philosophy Revised Edition*). The big difference is that this should probably be called the consolation of art – but other than that I guess the message of both is much the same.

The Message is pretty much that we are alone in the world. If you are to live a life that isn't a cliché you have to learn that most people don't live their own lives, they live lives that should be bound by quotation marks. "Most people are other people." Wilde says himself. They think other people's thoughts, they mouth whatever are the most popular opinions of the day, they watch the same stuff on television that everyone else does and they can even put together sentences grouped into endless paragraphs on subjects of infinite fascination as the merits of the computer generated graphics they saw in Avatar.

If you are going to live a worthwhile life (and isn't that the only question of any interest in the whole of philosophy – which is probably why it is the one question modern philosophy seems to avoid) then Wilde's advice is to at least try to be yourself. He acknowledges that doing that is a hard thing – Christ, they might even put you in gaol if you try that sort of thing – but the alternative is a much worse prison cell and one where you are both prisoner and warder, where you turn the key that locks you in yourself.

Eliot, of course, was wrong – but being a poet he gets to be wrong as long as he is beautifully wrong. We don't think of the key, each sitting in our prison thinking of the key as if that confirmed the prison – the most frightening thing is that we don't think of the key at all – we don't think of the key because to think of the key is to acknowledge the prison. And for most of us that is too much to acknowledge. Prison? What prison?

But there is an escape plan. We are individuals and life is not the ordered, rational, scientifically verifiable and graphed out hypothesis in fifteen variables that someone of the Enlightenment might have decided you

ought to think it is. Wilde sees the great conflict of the human soul as being that between Classicism and Romanticism and in that conflict we need to take sides and the side Wilde takes is Romanticism. As he says, “I am one of those who is made for exceptions, not for laws”.

And let's face it, we do like our victims to find forgiveness for us after we have meted out our punishments of them. Wilde even discovers Christ, in a sense – though, I think the Christ Wilde discovers isn't quite the same Christ that many Christians would be familiar with. This is not Christ the punisher, Christ the faith-healer or Christ the disappointed friend – but rather a Christ who is wise enough to use children as his example to us of who we should strive to be like. Such a Christ is someone worthy of being followed.

His was a Christ who was the lover of ignorant people, the protector of the exceptions, the defender of those who might just prove to have a great idea.

I thought this was a remarkable book – and a terribly sad book too. Although in the end of this Wilde, like Boethius, is not as bitter with his fate as he could so easily be, although he envisions a future life that is not dedicated to the pursuit solely of pleasure, but rather to a life that also acknowledges darker shades and minor keys; art is seen as the means to free ourselves from the horrors this world presents us with dreadful, if not predictable, regularity.

This was a remarkable book – I found it incredibly moving and often painfully sad. I think, though, that it is often good to be reminded of both the infinite harm we can cause to other people and also the near perfect gift we give that is contained in our simplest act of kindness. This really is a lovely piece of writing.

The stuff on Hamlet is worth reading on its own – nothing is invariably good, and art must also be included in that – Hamlet creating the play within the play in which to watch the effect this causes is Hamlet the artist. Hamlet's madness is Hamlet the actor. And this plays a great part in what is the tragedy of Hamlet.

This is, like so many of Wilde's works, full of quotable quotes and so here are a quick selection of some of my favourites –

“There were Christians before Christ. For that we should be grateful. The unfortunate thing is that there have been none since” –

“A man whose desire is to be something separate from himself, to be a member of parliament, or a successful grocer, or a prominent solicitor, or a judge, or something equally tedious, invariably succeeds in being what he wants to be. That is his punishment.” –

“I must accept the fact that one is punished for the good as well as the evil that one does”.

Luís C. says

Two magnificent texts by Oscar Wilde, particularly poignant.

The Ballad of Reading Gaol, the same place where Wilde was imprisoned, tells the true story and drama of a soldier sentenced for having murdered his wife.

De Profundis is a long letter addressed to Lord Douglas by Oscar Wilde who reproaches him for having abandoned him to his fate.

Oscar Wilde, who had accustomed us to very beautiful reflections on life and his aesthetics, gives us here a sort of last very moving testimony that will be published after his death in 1900.

Reckoner says

Πικραμενος, σαρκαστικος, πονεμενος ο Γουαιλντ φιλοσοφει, στοχαζεται, αναθεωρει για οτι αφορα την ζωη, τη Τεχνη και απευθυνει ενα δριμυ ??κατηγορω" εναντια στην πουριτανικη ηθικη της Βικτωριανης Αγγλιας, στον ιδιο τον ερωμενο του με τον αμεσο,ποιητικο και ιδιοφυη του λογο ανοιγει πληγες που δεν εχουν σκοπο να επουλωθουν. Κατω απο το μικροσκοπιο βαζει και τον ιδιο τον εαυτο του προσπαθωντας να διαχειριστει, τις αδυναμιες, τις αγωνιες του, το μισος και εχοντας ως σκοπο την προσωπικη τελειωση, την ηρεμια και την γαληνη. Περναει "δια πυρος και σιδηρου ξεροντας οτι "το μονο πραγματικο ελαττωμα ειναι η επιπολαιοτητα και πως οτι μαθαινει κανεις ειναι για καλο". Εκεινος δνε εχει σκοπο να το κανει ευκολο, συνειδητοποιει οτι πρεπει να γευτει και την Θλιψη για να προχωρησει παρα περα. Συγκλονιστικος !!!

leynes says

At the beginning of 2016, I read an abridged version of *De Profundis*. Alongside with *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime*, it was one of the first things I read by Oscar Wilde and that made me utterly and irrevocably fall in love with him. After finishing the abridged version, I dived into an extensive research on Oscar and uncovered the injustices he had to face during his lifetime. So, the abridged version of this letter solidified him as my trash child, and I'll forever be grateful for that.

So I'm even more excited that over two years later I finally got around to reading the full letter and let me tell you, the tea is scalding hot in that one! Whilst the abridged version omitted almost all passages in which Oscar called out Bosie and his lowly ways, the full version has it all. So many accusations, so many insults, so much grief, so much heartbreak. Even though Oscar claims it isn't so, **this letter is essentially a love letter**. Oscar claims that Bosie means nothing to him, that he has finally managed to break away ... oh, my darling child, between the lines it's so obvious how hurt, how fucking hurt, Oscar was that Bosie ignored him during his imprisonment. Oscar desperately wanted to receive letters from Bosie, be visited by him, have his affection and love... and when after two years, he didn't hear or see anything, **he fucking snapped**.

I have said that behind sorrow there is always sorrow. It were wiser still to say that behind sorrow there is always a soul. And to mock at a soul in pain is a dreadful thing.

De Profundis is not fun to read. It is absolutely heartbreaking. It's a demonstration of Oscar at his low point, you see the man for who he is, in the realest and rawest fashion; no mask to hide behind, no wit and snark to conceal his vulnerability. The letter is deeply personal and makes you feel like a perverted intruder or voyeur. These words weren't meant for us but as the man for whom they were decided never to read them (seriously, fuck you, Bosie!) I think Oscar wouldn't feel so bad about the public having a share in his suffering and feeling with and for him.

Oscar and Bosie's love story is a tragic one. Not just due to the confinements of Victorian England that rendered homosexual relationships as "indecent" and "gross", also because the two of them, in my frank judgement, didn't belong together. Their relationship was bound to be fucked up. Oscar saw in Bosie the man he always wanted to be, young, beautiful, rich, admired – he was unable to see Bosie for who he really was due to his idealisation of him. And Bosie sought in Oscar, well, a man that could provide for him, financially and socially. Bosie loved the spotlight, he loved being at the side of a man who was hailed and celebrated all over the country. As soon as Oscar's success dissolved, he no longer served a purpose for Bosie.

This is not a tale of star-crossed lovers. It's a tale of two men who were bound to destroy one another. In *De Profundis*, Oscar truthfully details their history and how he tried and continuously failed to cut off his ties to Bosie. Oscar needed Bosie. He couldn't let him go. The question arises whether Oscar, finally, needed to destroy himself. Oscar was way ahead of his time; that becomes even more clear when you take into consideration that he is more celebrated than ever in the 21st century. Just a few years back, the queen pardoned him for his "crimes".

Apart from its subject matter, *De Profundis* is incredibly well written. I honestly cannot imagine Oscar sitting down in his cell for months on end and coming up with such brilliancy. He famously states in that letter: "**I, once a lord of language, have no words in which to express my anguish and my shame.**" Oh, honey, don't lie, the words are at your disposal as they always were. Oscar manages to be brutally honest yet endearing in his appeal. He compares himself to his own creations, Dorian Gray in particular. Both "took pleasure where it pleases me, and passed on." Oscar is disgusted by his former self, his hedonism. Or at least he claims he is.

The thing that fucks me up the most about this letter is that it just shows the paradoxical nature of Oscar and how he, ultimately, failed and didn't fail to change his ways. Let me elaborate. I genuinely think that Oscar became a "better" person after his imprisonment. He finally managed to see the faults in his excessive ways and that he basically didn't give a shit about anyone apart from himself prior to 1895. I mean, I could go on a tangent about how he mistreated his wife and how Constance deserved so much better, but we don't have the time.

After *De Profundis*, the only other two works that he published were "Two Letters to the Daily Chronicle", in which he expressed his concern of the treatment of children in prisons, and "The Ballad of Reading Goal", another appeal for the reform of conditions in British prisons. Both works show Oscar's gain of empathy and that he was finally trying to do some good.

However, if you look at the bare facts of how he chose to lead his life after his release, I cannot help but shake my head. Whilst he claims in his letter that he'll refuse to see Bosie again (with the exception of one meeting in which he'll pick up some of his stuff from him), one of the first things he did after his release was going on a long vacation with him. Ignoring Robbie Ross and all of the other people who actually stood by his side during his imprisonment, he ran back to Bosie as if it were nothing. Their liaison was cut off by threats of cutting off their money. Both of them parted for a final time.

And even though Oscar trashes greedy rich people in his letter and reminds people to appreciate "less as more", he spent his salary of 150 pounds a year (that he got from family and friends) on booze and prostitutes. Of course, I understand that his fall from grace fucked him up real good and he couldn't make his exile in Paris a true home for him, and needed coping mechanism for all of his fatal losses (lack of status, no money, Bosie gone, Constance dead).

Society takes it upon itself the right to inflict appalling punishment on the individual, but it also has the supreme vice of shallowness and fails to realise what it has done. When the man's punishment is over, it leaves him to himself; that is to say, it abandons him at the very moment when its highest duty towards him begins.

Oscar knew that “society, as we have constituted it, will have no place for me, has none to offer;” nonetheless, I can’t help but think that Oscar was definitely not a person who practiced what he preached. He’ll be forever my trash son, don’t get me wrong, but when you look at his life after his imprisonment, he didn’t follow through with his resolutions from *De Profundis*.

The one thing that legit could make me cry for days is the fact that in his letter, Oscar still had so much hope for the future, for him as an artist; he *wanted* to create. He genuinely thought he would write again. The fact that he only managed to publish one narrative poem within the three years that he had left of his life, makes me incredibly sad. It’s one of the reasons why I appreciate “Reading Goal” so much, it’ll forever be my favourite work of his.

For anyone who is interested in Oscar, not just an artist but as a person, *De Profundis* is an essential read. It gives you a unique insight into his mind and how he coped with his fall from grace. In it, he claims that Bosie kept him from being creative, that he didn’t finish anything during his time at his side (i.e. the unfinished “A Florentine Tragedy” or “La Sainte Courtisane”). His words are vicious and ruthless. He wrote certain passages simply to hurt Bosie, to finally evoke a reaction from him. It’s a testimony of their toxic relationship, at the end of their time together both of them were left drained and hollow, yet couldn’t stay away from one another.

Most people are other people. Their thoughts are some one else's opinions, their lives a mimicry, their passions a quotation.

It’s a horrible letter, really, and yet the most beautiful and important thing Oscar has ever written. We finally see the man behind his mask, Oscar behind his constructed facade.

Teresa Proença says

"(...)

Uns amam pouco tempo, outros demais,
Uns vendem, outros compram;
Alguns praticam a ação com muitas lágrimas
E outros sem um suspiro, sequer:
Pois todo o homem mata o objeto do seu amor
E, no entanto, nem todo homem é condenado à morte.

Oscar Wilde (Balada do Cárcere de Reading)

De Profundis é uma longa carta, dirigida a Alfred Douglas, que Wilde escreveu na prisão de Reading, onde, durante dois anos, cumpriu pena de trabalhos forçados pela acusação de práticas homossexuais. É um relato pungente do sofrimento de um homem que perdeu tudo pelo “*amor que não ousa dizer seu nome*”: o património, a família, os amigos, a saúde, a reputação, o amor...

"(...)"
Jovem encantador,

*Dize-me: por que, triste e suspirante, erras
Nestes reinos aprazíveis? Peço-te, dize-me:
Qual o teu verdadeiro nome? "Meu nome é Amor."
Então, o primeiro virou-se para mim,
E gritou-me: "Ele mente, porque o nome dele é Vergonha.
Eu é quem sou o Amor, e costumava estar aqui
Sozinho, neste belo jardim, até que ele chegou
Como um intruso durante a noite.
Sou eu o verdadeiro Amor, que anima de uma chama mútua os corações dos rapazes e das raparigas.
Então, suspirando, o outro disse: "Segue tua fantasia,
Porque eu, eu sou o Amor que não ousa dizer seu nome".*

Alfred Douglas (Os Dois Amores)

Piyangie says

De Profundis or "from the depths" is a long letter written by Oscar Wilde to Lord Alfred Douglas while he was imprisoned in Reading Goal.

The letter is Wild's attempt to come to terms with his past, present dire circumstances and the future that he will have to face once released. As the name states, the letter is account from the depth - from his soul with all honesty. Although he holds that he is unjustly convicted, he nevertheless admits that he has committed grave errors in the past. He is repentant on the superficial life he has had led. And he seeks forgiveness and bestow forgiveness of those who he believed wronged him.

The letter is also a way of releasing his anger, bitterness and despair while he struggled to find a meaning and purpose for the continuation of his life. He himself admits that he wanted to end it in utter despair. But yet he struggles, despite his losses (he was made bankrupt and he was barred from any contacts with his sons), to come to terms with the nature of life which he say is "full of sorrow" which can be endured only though "love".

It was truly sad to read the emotional and mental agonies that such a fine artist had to go through. And when he said that he had brought disgrace to the name that his loving parents had bestowed on him, my heart broke. It is a huge burden one carries with oneself.

The letter is also full of his philosophical views and beautiful writing. Letter or not, it is by Oscar Wilde and one should not expect less.

K.D. Absolutely says

How can a love be so true be so wrong? No, erase that. Who am I to say that it is wrong?

Oscar Wilde (1854–1900), Irish writer, poet, aesthete and **Lord Alfred Douglas** (1870-1945), British author, poet, translator are in-love with each other and they are both **homosexuals**. Also, Wilde is married to

Constance Lloyd (1859-1898) and they have two children: **Cyril** and **Vivian**.

Douglas is single at 21 and Wilde, 37, married and already a father when they start their affair. After a year, Wilde is incarcerated due to "gross indecency", or homosexual acts. The year is 1895 and London is not yet open to homosexuals.

It was the Douglas father, **John Douglas**, 9th Marquess of Queensberry who gathered all the evidences against the then famous novelist and playwright Wilde. The motive according to Wilde: the father and son hate each other. The mother is afraid of both. In fact, the mother has been sending Wilde letters with a P.S. *On no account let Alfred know that I have written to you.*

De Profundis ("from the depths") is a long letter of lamentation of Wilde addressed to his lover Douglas, written during his imprisonment that lasted for 2-1/2 years. It started with bitterness (with Wilde enumerating the money spent on Douglas' whims and caprices) before moving to more profound and thought-provoking references to the Holy Bible, Shakespeare, The Divine Comedy, Plato, etc. It is worded beautifully the I had to stop several times and process and savor his words. Just to give you an example:

Suffering is a long moment. We cannot divide it by seasons. We can only record its moods, and chronicle their return. With us time itself does not progress. It revolves. It seems to circle round one centre of pain. The paralyzing immobility of life, every circumstance of which is regulated after an unchangeable pattern, so that we eat and drink and walk and lie down and pray, or kneel at least for prayer, according to the inflexible laws of an iron formula: this immobile quality, that makes each dreadful day in the minutest detail like its brother, seems to communicate itself to those external forces the very essence of whose existence is ceaseless change.

The big question I have is: did the young Douglas also love the much older Wilde? Or did he just use Wilde for money? The book did not answer this. There are evidences or references for both sides. I think it would depend on what the reader wants to believe. I would not want to give my opinion because if I do that, I will either be condemning or encouraging their kind of love. Who am I to do that?

The narrative is powerful, poignant and strong. If this is not anchored on love, I doubt if it will the impact that still resonates to its readers up to now. I Googled "De Profundis" and there found a Facebook account where seemingly gay men put their comments on this book. The prevailing sentiment, it seems, is that they find Wilde's musings liberating and inspiring.

Powerful narrative. Brilliant writer.

Vivian says

When faced with the abyss before you, is there only emptiness or is there a new beginning?

This is an intensely personal examination of Wilde's journey during incarceration. It follows the Stages of Grief and intertwines the religious with art. It has some incredible observations that made me examine my own thoughts and assumptions.

But it is a very unimaginative nature that only cares for people on their pedestals. A pedestal may be a very unreal thing. A pillory is a terrific reality. They should have known also how to interpret sorrow better. I have said that behind sorrow there is always sorrow. It were wiser still to say that behind sorrow there is always a soul. And to mock at a soul in pain is a dreadful thing. In the strangely simple economy of the world people only get what they give, and to those who have not enough imagination to penetrate the mere outward of things, and feel pity, what pity can be given save that of scorn?

georgia ? says

i'm not okay.

"Society, as we have constituted it, will have no place for me, has none to offer; but Nature, whose sweet rains fall on unjust and just alike, will have clefts in the rocks where I may hide, and secret valleys in whose silence I may weep undisturbed. She will hang the night with stars so that I may walk abroad in the darkness without stumbling, and send the wind over my footprints so that none may track me to my hurt: she will cleanse me in great waters, and with bitter herbs make me whole."

edit: after reading the complete version of this, i've increased the rating from four to five stars. oscar wilde's pain and love and bitterness is so powerful that raw emotion bleeds from the pages. my heart aches for him.

Kyriakos Sorokkou says

Καταρι?μαι την ?ρα και τη στιγμ? που αγ?ρασα αυτ? το βιβλ?ο
?χι, δεν ?χω κ?τι εναντ?ον της γραφ?ς του ?σκαρ Ου?ιλντ, αντιθ?τως αυτ? του το εκτεν?ς γρ?μμα το
βρ?κα ως μια υπ?ροχη και σπαραξικ?ρδια κατ?θεση ψυχ?ς.

Τ?τε τι καταρι?μαι;

Τον συγγραφ?α του προλ?γου της εισαγωγ?ς και της αν?λυσης του De Profundis.

Τ?σο εκτεν?ς ?ταν που εξαπλ?θηκε στο 1/3 του βιβλ?ου σαν κακο?θης ?γκος.

Δεν ?ταν τ?σο αν?λυση ?σο μια ευκαιρ?α να ξετυλ?ξει το ομοφοβικ? του ταλ?ντο ο
κριτικ?ς/σχολιαστ?ς P?γας Γαρταγ?νης. ?κανε επ?θεση στον Ου?ιλντ και ε?χε επ?σης και το
θρ?σος να πι?σει στο στ?μα του και τον Μεγ?λο Καβ?φη.

Ποιος; ?νας Ρ?γας Γαρταγ?νης πο? ο?τε η μ?να του δεν τον ξ?ρει να ασχοληθε? με δ?ο ποιητικο?ς θρ?λους.

Στην εισαγωγ? του υπ?ρχει αφθον?α ειρωνε?ας, πατροναρισμο?, δοκησισοφ?α και ?φθονες χριστιανοταλιμπανικ?ς μπο?ρδες.

Θα μου πε?τε: Τι περ?μενες απ? μια εισαγωγ? που γρ?φτηκε το 1955.

Το ξ?ρω, αλλ? αυτ? δεν απ?τρεψε απ' το να μ' αν?ψουν τα λαμπ?κια.

Επ?σης θα μου πε?τε γιατ? το αγ?ρασα. Το ε?δα ?τσι παλι? και βιντ?ζ και μ?λις ε?δα τον τ?τλο και το ?νομα του συγγραφ?α το π?ρα χωρ?ς δε?τερες σκ?ψεις, μ?σα σε ?γνοια με το τι θα δι?βαζα στην κριτικ?.

Θα παραθ?σω μερικ?ς απ? τις ομοφοβικ?ς του μπο?ρδες εδ?, ?τσι για να σας αν?ψουν κι εσ?ς τα λαμπ?κια. Τι; μ?νος μου θα τ' αν?βω; να μου κ?νετε παρ?α.

«?σο περισσ?τερο μια εποχ? ε?ναι βυθισμ?νη μ?σα [στον] βο?ρκο, τ?σο και οι αντιπροσωπε?οντες ?ργω και λ?γω αυτ?ν το βο?ρκο προβ?λλονται και θεωρο?νται μεγ?λοι συγγραφε?ς, [?πως για παρ?δειγμα] του δικο? μας μεγ?λου (;) Καβ?φη.

Συγγραφ?ας της παρακμ?ς και της ωραιοποιημ?νης σ?ψης.» σελ. 7-8

Καλ? μ?χρι εδ?; Π?με παρακ?τω:

«Και ακ?θεκτος και μαστουρωμ?νος [ο Ου?ιλντ] τρ?χει προς την τρ?τη και τελικ? πρ?ξη της τραγωδ?ας του, τη γερασμ?νη, αποκρουστικ?, κι ?χι λιγ?τερα τραγικ?, εικ?να του πορτρα?του του Ντ?ριαν Γκρα?η» σελ. 26

«Το ?λον δε πρ?το μ?ρος του Ντε Προφο?ντις, δεν ε?ναι παρ? η αποκ?λυψη των βρομερ?ν σχ?σεων δ?ο ομοφυλοφ?λων, εν?ς χυδα?ου και χωρ?ς καν?να τιδανικ? νεαρο? βλαστο? της αριστοκρατ?ας των μυλ?ρδων [Ντ?γκλας], που ε?χε βουτηχτε? στο βο?ρκο, αλλ? και κατορθ?νει να κρ?βει με μαεστρ?αν την ολοκληρωτικ? του διαφθορ?, εν?ς δηλ. κακο?θους νεαρο?, με ?να νοσηρ? ωραιοπαθ? [Ου?ιλντ] με καλλιτεχνικ? χαρ?σματα που καμουφλ?ρει την διαστροφ? του ντ?νοντ?ς την με καλλιτεχνικ? φορ?ματα..» σελ. 83

Να συνεχ?σω;

«Πνευματικ? και συναισθηματικ? δαλτωνισμ? [αχρωματοψ?α] ? μ?λλον μια μορφ? μερικ?ς σχιζιοφρ?νιας θα μπορο?σε να ονομ?σει κανε?ς την περ?πτωση του Ου?ιλντ.» σελ. 112

Ο Σχιζιοφρεν?ς Ου?ιλντ με το πρι?νι.

«[Ο Ου?ιλντ] ε?ναι νεκρ?ς πια για την τ?χνη, ε?ναι νεκρ?ς για τη ζω?..» σελ. 116

Νεκρ?ς για την τ?χνη ο Ου?ιλντ λ?ει. Τι ?λλες παπαρι?ς θα διαβ?σω!;

Η συν?χεια και το τ?λος στο μπλογκ μου ΒιβλιοΑλχημε?ες

Alice Poon says

A piece of beautiful, honest, philosophical writing that flows from a chastened soul.

Passages that tug at my heartstrings:

"To regret one's own experiences is to arrest one's own development. To deny one's own experiences is to put a lie into the lips of one's own life. It is no less than a denial of the soul."

"Truth in art is the unity of a thing with itself: the outward rendered expressive of the inward: the soul made incarnate: the body instinct with spirit."

"Now it seems to me that love of some kind is the only possible explanation of the extraordinary amount of suffering that there is in the world. I cannot conceive of any other explanation. I am convinced that there is no other, and that if the world has indeed, as I have said, been built of sorrow, it has been built by the hands of love, because in no other way could the soul of man, for whom the world was made, reach the full stature of its perfection. Pleasure for the beautiful body, but pain for the beautiful soul."

"Time and space, succession and extension, are merely accidental conditions of thought, the imagination can transcend them and move in a free sphere of ideal existences. Things also are in their essence of what we choose to make them; a thing is according to the mode in which we look at it."

"Now it seems to me that love of some kind is the only possible explanation of the extraordinary amount of suffering that there is in the world. I cannot conceive of any other explanation. I am convinced that there is no other, and that if the world has indeed, as I have said, been built of sorrow, it has been built by the hands of love, because in no other way could the soul of man, for whom the world was made, reach the full stature of its perfection. Pleasure for the beautiful body, but pain for the beautiful soul."

Το «*De profundis*» γρ?φτηκε στη φυλακ?, σε δι?ρκεια τρι?ν μην?ν το 1897. Ε?ναι μια περ?εργη εξομολ?γηση. ?να ξεχωριστ? γγραφο. Μια θρησκευτικ? μαρτυρ?α. Μια φιλοσοφικ? διατριβ?. Μια κραυγ? απελπισ?ας και θ?ρρους.

Το οξ?μωρο στην επιστολ? αυτ? αποτελε? το γεγον?ς πως απευθ?νεται αυστηρ?ς προσωπικ? σε κ?ποιον αποδ?κτη εν? παρ?λληλα ε?ναι? να εξαιρετικ? λογοτεχνικ? ργο για δημ?σια προβολ?.

Στην ουσ?α ε?ναι μια «εκ βαθ?ων» ψυχ?ς εξομολ?γηση του ?σκαρ Ου?ιλντ. Το κ?κνειο ?σμα εν?ς τερ?στιου πνευματικο? δημιουργο? με μια αφοριστικ? καταραμ?νη κραυγ? π?θους και εσωτερικ?ς ποι?τητας του Ου?ιλντ προς τον ?διο του τον εαυτ?.

Το θεμα του εγγαι μια τραγωδα πθουν. Μια εκφραστικ δυνατη τητα ενης απστευτα ρομαντικο?

και ερωτευμ?νου με τη ζω? και τα π?θη ανθρ?που που αισθ?νεται γρ?φοντας το, ?τι μιλ?ει απο τα β?θη της τελικ?ς του ?ττας.

Διαβ?ζοντας το αισθ?νεσαι το σπαραγμ? και την πτ?ση μιας τ?σο ευα?σθητης και ευφυ?στατης καλλιτεχνικ?ς φ?σης.

Συμπον?ς θαυμ?ζοντας παρ?λληλα την απ?λυτη καταστροφ? μιας υπεροχ?ς προσωπικ?τητας, που ?λλαξε τη φιλοσοφ?α και την ποι?τητα της τ?χνης.

?ναν μοναχικ? γ?γαντα της αγ?πης και της μετ?νοιας που ακολουθ?ντας την καρδι? του, τον απεγνωσμ?νο ?ρωτα, τον β?αια εθιστικ? δρ?μο της απολαυστικ?ς ηδον?ς, κατ?ληξε να μη γνωρ?ζει πλ?ον αν τον ζηλε?ουν ? αν τον λυπο?νται. Αν τον συμπονο?ν με θλιβερ? καταν?ηση ? τον χλευ?ζουν με ρηχ? ευχαρ?στηση.

Ταπειν?θηκε, θυσι?στηκε, ?χασε τα ?σα πλουσιοπ?ροχα του ε?χε χαρ?σει η ζω? απλ?χερα -απο κοινωνικ? θ?ση, οικογενειακ? ευτυχ?α, οικονομικ? ευμ?ρεια, πνευματικ? καλλι?ργεια, εως καλλιτεχνικ? αν?ψωση στο θρ?νο της τ?χνης. Και παραδ?θηκε στην τιμωρ?α ?νευ ?ρων.

Αποδ?χτηκε τον δημ?σιο εξευτελισμ?. Τον χλευασμ? των εχθρ?ν του. Την προδοσ?α των φ?λων του. Το χαμ? αγαπημ?νων του προσ?πων και προσωπικ?ς απ?λειες ανυπολ?γιστης αξ?ας.

Συνηθισμ?νος να μιλ?ει με αβ?αστη ανωτερ?τητα, φα?νεται να προκαλε? την τραγωδ?α της μο?ρας και τη γεμ?ζει με μια σ?γχρονη φ?ρσα που πηγ?ζει απο το κοινωνικ? καθεστ?ς.

?ταν γρ?φει ειναι σαν να μιλ?ει με ν?τες, σαν να συνθ?τει τη μουσικ? που ταιριαζει ακριβ?ς στην ανομ?α και την κατ?ντια της ζω?ς του.

Ε?ναι ?νας ?ρχοντας υψηλ?ς πολιτιστικ?ς κληρονομι?ς και διαχρονικ?ς αξ?ας.

Ο διασυρμ?ς, η βιαι?τητα, τα αισχρ? και φθην? κουτσομπολι?, η στ?ρηση πνευματικ?ς εμπειρ?ας και το ρηχ? α?σθημα, ?σο κι αν αρμ?ζουν στην κατ?σταση που αναγκ?στηκε να ζει, δε του ταιρι?ζουν, ε?ναι ψε?τικα, σαν το χρυσ?φι του Μ?δα.

Προσπαθε? μ?σα απο την εξομολ?γηση του να εκλογικε?σει τα δειν? του. Για να αντ?ξει. Βι?νει κατ?ψυχα και κατ?σαρκα τη θλ?ψη. Πιστε?ει πως π?σω απο κ?θε π?νο, κ?θε θλ?ψη, υπ?ρχει μια ψυχ? που αξ?ζει να αγαπι?ται, που στ?κεται σε συμβολικ? θ?ση με το ?διο το μυστικ? της ?παρξης.

Αναγ?γει τη μο?ρα του σε κοιν? και πανανθρ?πινη. Δεν υπ?ρχει κανε?ς, διατε?νεται, που να ε?ναι τ?σο ?θλιος ?σο ο ?διος, να ζει σε παρ?μοια αθλι?τητα με τη δικ? του και να μην «π?σχει» για το μυστικ? της ζω?ς.

Πιστε?ει στην πνευματικ? μορφ? του αγνωστικισμο? και του προσδ?δει μια τελετουργικ? γλ?σσα και μια κοσμικ? αξ?ωση, ?πως αξ?ζει σε κ?θε θρησκε?α.

Ε?ναι βαθι? ατομιστ?ς, ?πως ?ταν κατ? την ?ποψη του και ο ?διος ο Χριστ?ς.

Ισχυρ?ζεται πως η φυλ?κιση του τον αποδ?σμευσε απο κ?θε υλικ? αναγκαι?τητα και εν?σχυσε την αυτοπεπο?θηση του.

Η απ?λυτη ιδ?α που κ?νει την αυτοκαταστροφ? του ενα ?νειρο επανεκκ?νησης ε?ναι η λογικ? της τ?χνης.

Η τ?χνη, που κ?νει το φανταστικ? πραγματικ? ?παρξη και εν?νει την ?λη με το πνε?μα.

Ιδανικ?ς επαγγελματ?ας της αν?τατης τ?χνης σ?μφωνα με τον Ου?ιλντ ε?ναι ο Χριστ?ς.

Ο Χριστός που κανε τα πντα για να καταληφουν οι νθρωποι πως το βασιλειο των ουρανών ν ειναι η δια η ψυχή τους. Διδαξε πως η αγπη ειναι ομορφητερη απο το μσος και η μετνοια ο μοναδικής τρπος για να αλληξει κανες το παρελθων.

Αγπησε τους αμαρτωλος περισστερο απο τους ευσεβες και τα σκοτδια τους.

Η τελικη απομηση του συγγραφα εναι η αποφασιστικητητα και η θληση να μεταμορφωσει την ψετικη αξα του υλικο σε αισθητικη θησαυρο.

Μσα απο τη διαρκειας α της τχνης η χρη της πστης εναι μια διαρκειας υπενθμιση και μια προτροπη για να ξεφγει απο το βθος της δυστυχας του μσω της δημιουργας.

To De profundis dñs εναι μια δλωση εξομολγησης μετανοας.

Αποτελεσμα εθραυστη πρτη λη που θα μποροσε να δημιουργησει τη βση στριξης ενντια στην καταβαρθρωση της ανθρπινης ζωης.

Καλ ανγνωση.

Πολλος ασπασμος!!!

Franco Santos says

¿Algunas vez les pasó de leer el inicio de un libro para solo echarle un vistazo y terminaron leyendo mucho más de lo que planeaban?

Bueno, a mí me acaba de pasar: no pude parar de leer hasta terminarlo.

Puedo ser perfectamente feliz solo. Con libertad, libros, flores y la luna, quién no puede ser feliz?

Me gustó muchísimo esta carta (megacarta) de Oscar Wilde a su amante. Este trabajo me permitió conocer más a fondo a uno de mis autores favoritos; a comprenderlo y admirar su grandeza y complejidad. Me enteré de muchas cosas de su vida que no me las hubiera imaginado. **Wilde expresó con transparencia sus pensamientos y su sentir.** Tiene partes que me llegaron al alma. Wilde escarba en la sociedad y en las injusticias de la época; asimismo escarba en sus decepciones y tristezas. Me permitió ver su espíritu desbordado por las lágrimas y su corazón herido. **Me enseñó parte de su jardín en donde mantiene a sus arboles más verdes, y también me mostró en donde yacen sus hierbas más pobres.**

Evripidis Gousiaris says

Υπροχος! Η γλσσα και οι σκψεις του με μγεψαν. Ανυπομον να διαβσω Το Πορτρατο του Ντριαν Γκρν για το οποιο ακοω τσα και τσα :)
