



The Nihilists (Oscar Wilde Collection)

Oscar Wilde

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Dodo Collections brings you another classic from Oscar Wilde, The Nihilists.

The Nihilists is a play by Oscar Wilde. It is a melodramatic tragedy set in Russia and is loosely based on the life of Vera Zasulich. It was Wilde's first play, and the first to be performed. In 1880, with only a few copies privately printed, arrangements were made with noted actresses for a production the United Kingdom, but this never materialized. The first ever public performance was in New York in 1883 at the Union Square Theatre based on revisions made by Wilde while lecturing in America in 1882. The play was not a success and folded after only one week. It is rarely revived.

Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde (16 October 1854 – 30 November 1900) was an Irish author, playwright and poet. After writing in different forms throughout the 1880s, he became one of London's most popular playwrights in the early 1890s. He is remembered for his epigrams, his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, his plays, as well as the circumstances of his imprisonment and early death.

At the height of his fame and success, while his masterpiece, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895), was still on stage in London, Wilde had the Marquess of Queensberry prosecuted for libel. The Marquess was the father of Wilde's lover, Lord Alfred Douglas. The charge carried a penalty of up to two years in prison. The trial unearthed evidence that caused Wilde to drop his charges and led to his own arrest and trial for gross indecency with other men. After two more trials he was convicted and imprisoned for two years' hard labour. In 1897, in prison, he wrote *De Profundis*, which was published in 1905, a long letter which discusses his spiritual journey through his trials, forming a dark counterpoint to his earlier philosophy of pleasure. Upon his release he left immediately for France, never to return to Ireland or Britain. There he wrote his last work, *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* (1898), a long poem commemorating the harsh rhythms of prison life. He died destitute in Paris at the age of 46.



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Matthew Thompson:

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Gale Velez:

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Antonio Ritchie:

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