

**PinkMonkey® Literature Notes on . . .**

# *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

by

**Robert Louis Stevenson**



MonkeyNotes Edited by Diane Sauder

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## KEY LITERARY ELEMENTS

### SETTING

The novel is set in nineteenth-century London. The first eight chapters of the novel move rapidly between various locations, primarily the street by the back door of Jekyll's house and the interiors of the homes of the principal characters; Dr. Jekyll, Mr. Hyde, Dr. Lanyon, and Mr. Utterson. Chapters nine and ten consist of documents written by Lanyon and Jekyll respectively, and are given no specific location.

### CHARACTERS

#### Major Characters

**Dr. Jekyll** - a learned doctor who is interested in the "dual" nature of humanity. He compounds a drug that separates and releases his evil side.

**Mr. Hyde** - the evil part of Dr. Jekyll and the antagonist of the novel.

**Mr. Utterson** - a respectable and a law-abiding citizen who uncovers most of the mystery surrounding Jekyll and Hyde. He is Jekyll's and Lanyon's friend and lawyer.

#### Minor Characters

**Mr. Enfield** - a cousin of Utterson. Enfield gives the first description of Hyde's strangeness and cruelty.

**Dr. Lanyon** - a successful and respectable doctor and an old friend of both Jekyll and Utterson. He opposes Jekyll's experiments and is crushed by the shock of discovering that Jekyll and Hyde are one.

**Poole** - a faithful servant of Dr. Jekyll. He enlists Utterson's help when he fears that Jekyll has been murdered.

**Inspector Newcomen** - a police inspector from Scotland Yard. He investigates the Carew murder case.

**Mr. Guest** - Utterson's chief clerk. He discovers a similarity in the handwriting of Jekyll and Hyde.

**Bradshaw** - Jekyll's footman. He is sent to the back of the house to guard the door should Hyde escape.

**Unnamed Maid Servant** - a very minor character. She sees Hyde assault Carew and informs the police.

**Sir Danvers Carew** - the respectable gentleman whom Hyde murders, setting off the search for him by the police.

### CONFLICT

**Protagonist** - The protagonist of the novel is Dr. Jekyll, a learned doctor and scientist. He devises a drug, which releases the evil side of his nature and he becomes Mr. Hyde. He eventually comes to regret his experiments and fights a losing battle to renounce and defeat Hyde.

**Antagonist** - The antagonist of the novel is Mr. Hyde, who represents the evil side of Jekyll's nature. Hyde commits crimes without feeling guilty and tries to take over from Jekyll. Hyde commits suicide in the end, when he realizes his capture is imminent.

**Climax** - The climax of the novel is reached when Utterson and Poole break open the laboratory door to search for Dr. Jekyll. There they find the body of Mr. Hyde, but no evidence of the disappeared Dr. Jekyll, except for a mysterious envelope addressed to Utterson, which contains Jekyll's confession. In the last two chapters, the mystery will be revealed through a note left by Dr. Lanyon and by Jekyll's confession.

**Outcome** - Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde are revealed to be one, and Jekyll details his struggle to overcome Hyde's grip on him. In the end, Jekyll can no longer keep himself from turning into Hyde, who kills himself when he realizes he is about to be captured. Jekyll's scientific discovery thus leads to his tragic death.

### **SHORT PLOT/CHAPTER SUMMARY (Synopsis)**

*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is the story of a gifted doctor who discovers a drug which can release the evil side of one's nature. This drug changes Dr. Jekyll into Mr. Hyde. Stevenson does not reveal the details of Jekyll's story until the end of the novel, but presents the tale as a mystery, in which the main characters try to figure out the identity of Mr. Hyde and understand his strange relationship with Dr. Jekyll.

Stevenson begins the novel on a street in Soho. Mr. Utterson, a lawyer, and his cousin, Mr. Enfield, are taking their usual Sunday walk. They stop at an unusual door, and Enfield tells Utterson that sometime back, he had seen a strange and ill-tempered man trample a small girl and then walk away. Enfield and other bystanders had forced the stranger to pay money to the girl's family to avoid trouble. The man then entered the door and emerged with ten pounds in gold and a check signed by Dr. Jekyll. This stranger is none other than Mr. Hyde. Enfield has a hard time describing Hyde, other than to say that everyone present found him strangely repulsive.

Utterson returns home, deeply disturbed, as Jekyll's will, which is in his possession, stipulates that in the event of his death or disappearance, his entire estate should go to his "friend and benefactor Edward Hyde." He visits Dr. Lanyon, a mutual friend, to ask him if he knows anything of Hyde, but Lanyon has had a falling out with Jekyll and has lately seen little of him. Utterson begins searching for Hyde. One evening, he meets him at the door, but Hyde, suspicious of Utterson's intentions, becomes enraged and runs into the house. Like Enfield, Utterson, too, is repulsed by Hyde and cannot say exactly why. He goes to Jekyll's house and meets with Poole, Jekyll's butler. At this point it is revealed that the mysterious door is the back entrance to Jekyll's house. Poole tells Utterson that Hyde has access to the house and that the servants have orders to obey him.

After a dinner party a few weeks later, Utterson tries to persuade Jekyll to have his will changed, but Jekyll insists that he cannot and asks that Utterson please comply with his wishes regarding Hyde. Utterson is convinced that Hyde is blackmailing Jekyll for some youthful indiscretion.

Nearly a year later, Hyde murders Sir Danvers Carew, a respectable gentleman. Knowing of Jekyll's and Hyde's association, Utterson visits Jekyll and is surprised to find him looking ill. Jekyll presents to Utterson a letter which he says is from Hyde. It states that Hyde is making good his escape and that Dr. Jekyll need not take any further trouble regarding his safety.

Hyde vanishes and Jekyll regains his health and spirits. He even reconciles with Lanyon. Shortly after a dinner party, however, he goes into sudden seclusion and refuses to see Utterson. Perplexed, Utterson again visits Lanyon and is shocked to find him near death. Lanyon does not wish to talk about Jekyll. A few weeks later, Lanyon dies. Among his papers is an envelope addressed to Utterson, with the instructions that it not be opened except on the death or disappearance of Jekyll. Utterson, feeling that Hyde must somehow be involved, is both curious and suspicious, but he does not open the envelope.

Jekyll continues to remain in seclusion, and eventually Utterson stops attempting to see him. One Sunday, Utterson and Enfield go for their usual walk and happen by the back of Jekyll's house. They see Jekyll sitting near the window, looking sad and ill. They speak to him, and he brightens momentarily, before being struck with a look of terror and pain and closing the window. Enfield and Utterson are terrified and walk away in silence. Although they do not realize it, they have witnessed the beginning of the transformation process from Jekyll to Hyde.

One evening, Poole comes to Utterson and asks him for his help, and they return to Jekyll's house. Jekyll has recently been acting very strangely, having locked himself in his laboratory and sending Poole out to various chemists in search of a certain drug. Poole has not heard his master's voice in over a week, and he fears that Jekyll has been murdered and that someone or something is hiding in Jekyll's laboratory. When the two men break into the laboratory, they discover the body of Edward Hyde. It appears that Hyde has committed suicide. Searching in vain for Dr. Jekyll's body, they find an enclosure from Jekyll addressed to Utterson, instructing him to read Dr. Lanyon's note and then, if he so wishes, his own, enclosed confession.

The last two chapters consist of these documents. Dr. Lanyon, in his note, reveals that he has discovered that Jekyll and Hyde are one. Dr. Jekyll confesses through his written statement that he had wanted to separate the good and the bad aspects of himself and had discovered a drug, which would allow him to do so. By turning into Mr. Hyde, his evil aspect, he could commit various sins and escape punishment or censure for them. Although he was ashamed of himself, he could not help his actions. Over time, Hyde became stronger, and eventually he was becoming Hyde without the aid of the drug. He managed to keep Hyde in check by taking the drug which transformed himself back into Jekyll, but eventually his supply began to be exhausted, and, due to an unknown impurity in his original batch, he could not make any more of it. He writes his confession as Jekyll, under the influence of the last of the drug, knowing that soon thereafter, he will turn into Hyde for the very last time. He does not care what happens to Hyde after that, for at that moment, his own life, as Jekyll, will be over.

## **THEMES**

### **Major Themes**

The dual nature of the human personality is the major theme of Stevenson's novel. Dr. Jekyll, the protagonist of the novel, is a kind and respected man. His friends, however, cannot understand his companionship with the wicked and mysterious Mr. Hyde, who seems to have come from nowhere and has a terrible hold on the doctor. Even as Hyde commits crimes that shock all of London, nobody can guess how and why the two men are so close to each other. Only at the end of the novel is the incredible truth revealed — that Jekyll and Hyde are one.

### **Minor Theme**

The problem of evil forms the minor theme of the novel. Evil finds its embodiment in the figure of Hyde. In this novel, Stevenson evolves a psychology of human personality, according to which even the most angelic person in the world may have a hidden evil side. When released, this evil persona can engage in brutal and even murderous behavior.

## **MOOD**

The central mood of the novel is one of mystery and terror and an atmosphere of suspense prevails throughout. The tremendous ambition of Dr. Jekyll, coupled with his curiosity, enables him to make a shocking and unheralded discovery. However, this discovery leads to his moral deterioration and culminates in his tragic death.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION - BIOGRAPHY**

Robert Louis Stevenson was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, on November 13, 1850. He was in poor health most of his life, mostly from respiratory troubles, and sicknesses during his childhood interfered with his schooling. However, he read a lot and developed a passion for literature.

From an early age, Stevenson yearned to be an author. He clung to this aspiration in spite of opposition from his parents, who wanted him to become an engineer. He entered Edinburgh University, studied engineering for three years, and then took up law, qualifying for the bar in 1875. But he was not really interested in either of these professions. His first and last love was literature, and while still in college, he began to contribute essays to the *Cornhill Magazine* and other periodicals.

In Stevenson's day, those with health problems were encouraged to travel to encounter better climates, and Stevenson, who was restless anyway, spent several years doing just that. His first two books, *An Inland Voyage* (1878) and *Travels With a Donkey* (1879), were based on his travels in Europe. In addition to travel books, Stevenson also wrote short stories, novels, and poems, and, despite his poor health, he was a prolific writer. *New Arabian Nights* appeared in 1882, followed by *Treasure Island*, the work that made him famous, in 1883. *A Child's Garden of Verses*, a still-popular collection of children's poems, appeared in 1885, and *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* was published in 1886. Many of his major works of fiction, such as *Kidnapped* (1886) and *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889) show clearly how much he enjoyed adventure and the physical pleasures of new places and new faces.

In 1876 in France, he met Fanny Osbourne, an American woman separated from her husband, and he moved to San Francisco to be with her in 1879. They married in 1880 and soon returned to Scotland. After spending several more years traveling, they eventually settled in Samoa, an island in the South Pacific, where he spent the last four years of his life. *A Footnote to History* (1892) and *In the South Seas* (1896) are based on his travels in the South Pacific. Stevenson was deeply enamored of and sympathetic to the islanders and won their love and respect. He died of a cerebral hemorrhage on December 3, 1894.

## **LITERARY/HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

Stevenson claimed that his works originated in or came to him almost wholly in dreams, as gifts from the "brownies," or fairies, and *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* appears to be no exception. Said Stevenson of the genesis of the work:

"I had long been trying to write a story on this subject, to find a body, a vehicle, for that strong sense of man's double being which must at times come in upon and overwhelm the mind of every thinking creature.... Then came one of those financial fluctuations to which (with an elegant modesty) I have hitherto referred in the third person. For two days I went about racking my brains for a plot of any sort; and on the second night I dreamed the scene at the window, and a scene afterward split in two, in which Hyde, pursued for some crime, took the powder and underwent the change in the presence of his pursuers. All the rest was made awake, and consciously, although I think I can trace in much of it the manner of my Brownies."

Over a period of three days, not wanting to lose the story, he reputedly wrote almost thirty thousand words without pausing.

The idea of a double life or personality had long haunted Stevenson. Eight years earlier, in collaboration with W. E. Henley, Stevenson had written the play, *Deacon Brodie*. It was a dramatization of the life of a man who, by day, was a respectable and eminent citizen of Edinburgh. But at night, dressed in an appropriate

costume, he was a clever and audacious burglar. Other inspirations for the idea of the double life have, of course been suggested. C.H.E. Brookfield gives the reader the following version of the origin of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*:

I was in [Stevenson's] company at the moment that he conceived the germ of the idea of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. He was inveighing against a man with whom he had done business and with whose methods he was dissatisfied. The man's name was Samuel Creggan, or something like it. "He receives you with Samuel's smile on his face, with the gesture of Samuel he invites you into a chair, with Samuel's eyes cast down in self depreciation he tells you how well-satisfied his clients have always been with his dealings; but every now and again you catch a glimpse of Creggan peeping out like a white ferret. Creggan is the real man. Samuel is only superficial."

## **CHAPTER SUMMARIES WITH NOTES**

### **CHAPTER 1: Story of the Door**

#### **Summary**

Mr. Utterson, a lawyer, and his cousin, Mr. Richard Enfield, go for a walk as they usually do on Sundays. On a familiar street, they come near an empty building, which has an ugly door with no bell or knocker.

Enfield points to the door and says that there is a story attached to it. One "black" winter's night, as he was walking home alone on that street, he saw an ugly and strange man knock down a little girl and then walk away, heedless of her screams. Enfield chased down the man and brought him back to where the little girl was. By then, the family of the girl had collected there. Their doctor soon arrives and determines that the child is not hurt. Enfield noticed that everyone there seemed to take an instant disliking to the man which went beyond their mere outrage at his behavior.

The doctor and Enfield threatened to publicize the incident and, to avoid a scandal, the man agreed to pay the child's family to settle the matter. He then led the family to that door, took out a key, went inside, and returned with ten pounds in gold and a check for ninety pounds. The check was signed with the name of a respectable man, whom Enfield cannot mention.

When Enfield expressed his disbelief that the check was genuine, the man agreed to stay with them until the banks opened in the morning. The next day, Enfield himself submitted the check, which turned out to be valid.

Enfield believes that the man was engaged in blackmail and that there might be more to the story as well. When Utterson asks him if he has ever spoken about the incident with the gentleman on whose account the check was drawn, Enfield says that he has not. He speculates that someone must live in the house, although he cannot be sure. It does not appear to have any other door. There are three windows overlooking the first floor, but none below, and they are always shut. Nobody comes and goes into the house except this man.

Utterson asks for the name of the ill-tempered man. Enfield tells him that his name is Hyde and that there is something displeasing and detestable about his appearance, but that he cannot easily describe him.

Utterson then inquires whether Enfield is certain that Hyde has a key. He reveals that he is asking because he already knows the name of the other man. Enfield is upset that Utterson did not say anything earlier, but affirms that the man indeed has a key and that he saw him use it less than a week earlier. When Utterson sighs

deeply, Enfield says that he should not have spoken about the incident. They both agree never to refer to it again.

## Notes

The opening chapter of the novel is set in a street in London, just near the door of the house in which Hyde lives. Although it is in a dingy neighborhood, the street is a respectable and cheerful one. The house where Hyde appears to live, however, is dirty and neglected. It is out of place and something of a mystery. Its windows are shut, but clean, and, the only person who ever seems to enter or leave it is Hyde, and he only rarely. Thus, Stevenson creates an atmosphere which is out of the ordinary in order to begin his story.

The reader is introduced to two characters in this chapter, Utterson and Enfield. Since they are to witness a future crucial scene, it is necessary to ascertain their views and credibility at an early stage. Utterson is an austere, generally undemonstrative man who has tremendous self-control. He loves good wine and enjoys it at parties. But when he is alone, he restricts himself to gin rather than expensive wine. Utterson has nothing to do with other people's private affairs and treats and behaves with everyone in the same manner. His young cousin Enfield, in contrast, is a "well-known man about town, outgoing and curious." Despite their differences, the two are good friends, and it is their usual practice to go for a walk together on Sundays.

Enfield tells Utterson about the incident that took place near the house. Hyde had trampled a little girl of about eight or ten and then walked away, unconcerned about the agony he had caused. When the bystanders forced him to pay for the child's welfare, he entered the house and emerged with ten pounds in gold and a check drawn on the account of respectable man. Enfield relates this story briefly and precisely, yet the reader sees that it is a confidence between two men not given to confidences.

The dialogue is skillfully handled to give the reader a further insight into the characters of Utterson and Enfield. Though the two men are of different outward temperaments, they share certain characteristics. Both are perceptive. Enfield notices many details about Hyde's house, which an average passerby might not have. He even remembers the name of Hyde, whom he has met only once. Utterson, in turn, questions Enfield in detail about Hyde, trying to learn more about Hyde's character. Enfield, despite his curiosity about Hyde and the gentleman he appears to be blackmailing, is reluctant to enter into moral judgment. He prefers to mind his own business rather than talk about someone in a discrediting manner. Utterson too, is reluctant to judge, though, he is shrewder and more reserved than his cousin. He knows that the house is owned by Jekyll, but he keeps this information to himself.

It is certain that Enfield does not know about Dr. Jekyll's friendship with Utterson. Utterson's interest in Jekyll's affairs shows how much he is concerned about his friend's reputation. His vow of silence with Enfield indicates how he wishes to protect his friend's reputation.

The exchange of information between the two contributes to the element of mystery in the novel. The reader is given scraps of information and a hint about Hyde's evil. Stevenson establishes that something terrible is going on, but leaves the details to reader's imagination. The reader wonders why and how the strange man whom people loathe at first sight could give a check signed by a respectable man. The reader also wonders who this respectable man actually is. In the next chapter, it will be revealed, of course, that it is Dr. Jekyll, and that Utterson's interest in the story is motivated by fear for Jekyll, who is his friend. Although almost every modern reader will know that Jekyll is Hyde, Stevenson presents the story at first as a conventional mystery. It is not until the second to last chapter that the reader learns Hyde's true identity, and it is only in the last chapter that the whole story of Jekyll's experimentation with the drug that transforms him into Hyde is revealed.

## **CHAPTER 2: Search for Mr. Hyde**

### **Summary**

That evening, Mr. Utterson returns home in a poor mood. After supper, he takes an envelope containing the will of Dr. Jekyll from his safe and studies it. The will states that upon his death all of Jekyll's possessions should pass to his "friend and benefactor" Mr. Edward Hyde. In addition, should Jekyll unexplainably disappear for more than three months, Hyde should also inherit his estate. The will seems mad to him, and, now that someone has given him a description of Hyde and his behavior, Utterson is even more perplexed and perturbed.

He decides to visit their common friend, Dr. Lanyon, to learn more about the matter. When Utterson mentions Jekyll's name, Lanyon says that the two had become estranged and angrily calls his research "unscientific balderdash." Utterson downplays Lanyon's remark, figuring it is a mere scientific dispute. When he asks about Mr. Hyde, Lanyon says that he has never heard of him.

Utterson goes home disappointed and sleeps poorly that night. The next morning he is still haunted by the faceless figure of Mr. Hyde. He is very eager to meet Hyde and learn why Dr. Jekyll has willed his property to him.

Utterson begins visiting the door regularly. One night, he hears some footsteps. He sees a strange looking man at the door and asks him whether his name is Hyde. The man shrinks back, as though he were afraid. Then he faces Utterson defiantly and asks him how he knows him. Utterson says that he knows him by description. After all, they have common friends like Dr. Jekyll. At this, Hyde gets very angry and accuses him of telling lies, as he knows that Jekyll never would have mentioned him to Utterson. When Utterson tries to calm him, Hyde laughs savagely and quickly goes in.

Utterson stands disturbed for a while. Then he walks on, thinking about the problem. He feels a tremendous disgust for Hyde and fears that he has an evil soul. He pities Dr. Jekyll for being cursed with such a companion.

Utterson goes to Jekyll's house and is admitted by Poole, Jekyll's butler, who goes in to see whether Dr. Jekyll is at home. He returns to say that he is not in. Utterson remarks that he saw Mr. Hyde "go in by the old dissecting room door" and Poole replies that Hyde, indeed, has a key and that, furthermore, all the servants are under orders to obey him. He never dines in the house, however, but only spends time in the laboratory.

Utterson leaves with a heavy heart. He feels pity for Dr. Jekyll and thinks that he is being blackmailed for some wrong he committed in his youth. He then thinks about his own past; though "fairly blameless," he has still committed some humbling wrongs. He then thinks of Hyde and speculates that he must have committed many black deeds secretly. He fears that if Hyde suspects the contents of Jekyll's will, Jekyll's life may be in danger, and he resolves to try to help his friend.

### **Notes**

In this chapter, a bit more of the mystery is revealed. The respectable man whom Hyde appears to be blackmailing is Dr. Jekyll, a close friend of Utterson's. Jekyll has named Hyde as the benefactor of his will, not only in the case of his death, but in the case of his disappearance for more than three months. The mysterious door that Hyde entered is actually a part of Jekyll's house, and Hyde has free access to it. Utterson is understandably concerned for his friend's safety and well being.



Utterson is so upset by Enfield's story that he sets out to interfere in someone else's business. His hunting down of Hyde and his questioning of Lanyon are out of character for him and show how much he cares for his friend, Dr. Jekyll.

Lanyon believes that Jekyll has somehow gone "wrong in mind" over the last several years and he becomes visibly upset when he mentions Jekyll's experiments. Utterson is nonplused, however, and attributes Lanyon's annoyance to a trifling scientific dispute. As a generally dispassionate man, passion in others is foreign to him.

Utterson is obsessed with Hyde, however. He haunts the Soho streets and waits near the strange door, hoping to meet him. When Utterson eventually does meet Hyde, the event is somewhat anticlimactic; Stevenson does not allow the mystery to be cleared up but, rather, extends it. Although Hyde initially hides his face, he does eventually allow Utterson to see it, and when Utterson says that he will now remember him, Hyde coolly gives him his card. This shocks Utterson, who fears that Hyde knows about the will and thus expects to see him again. But he remains outwardly calm. When Hyde blows up at what he takes as Utterson's lie and terminates the interview, Enfield is further upset, but exercises remarkable self-control, giving the reader the impression that he is immune to such irrational responses. Indeed, he immediately begins pondering over the mystery of Hyde, trying to figure out a rational solution for both Hyde's behavior and his own reaction to him.

Stevenson now plays a joke on the reader. Utterson goes to Dr. Jekyll's house, which is around the corner from the strange door. Like Utterson, the reader expects to meet Dr. Jekyll. But like him, the reader too is disappointed, as Dr. Jekyll is not at home. At this point, Utterson casually reveals that the strange door is actually attached to Jekyll's house and that Hyde has access to it.

Jekyll's house is set in a once handsome but now decayed square. It is opulent, however, giving the impression that Jekyll has been concerned with other matters while the neighborhood has changed around him and adding to the sense of mystery. Jekyll is clearly of high social standing, and the interior of his house and his servants reinforce this impression. Utterson questions Poole, the butler, in his typical lawyer's manner. Poole is respectful, and he trusts Utterson too much to hide anything from him. His scale of values is quite clear: Hyde never "dines" in the house proper; he is not socially accepted. Rather, he comes and goes by the laboratory. At the same time, the servants are under orders to obey him. Thus, Utterson's suspicions that Dr. Jekyll is being blackmailed are strengthened. Utterson realizes that the problem concerning Hyde's identity, instead of being solved, is getting more complicated.

At this point, Hyde's character is somewhat ambivalent. He does not yet appear as completely the monster he will show himself to be. Although he lacks concern for his fellow humans, he is controlled and reserved enough to pay off the family of the girl to avoid an incident. When Utterson surprises him at the door and asks to see his face, Hyde agrees to do so and calmly asks that he tell him how he knows him in return. At the same time, Hyde is emotionally volatile; he blows up when he thinks Utterson is lying to him. Physically, Hyde is also something of a mystery. In Victorian literature, looks were often associated with moral characteristics. Hyde is small man (this will later be an indication that the evil part of Jekyll is initially small) and certainly unpleasant looking. However, though there appears to be something deformed about his appearance, Utterson is unable to say what it is, and, indeed, not even Hyde's appearance, voice, and behavior combined can explain Utterson's "disgust, loathing and fear." He only has a vague sense that there is something evil about Hyde.

## **CHAPTER 3: Dr. Jekyll was Quite at Ease**

### **Summary**

Two weeks later, Dr. Jekyll has some friends for dinner. After dinner, when the other guests have departed, Utterson remains, as he often does on previous occasions. Jekyll has a warm and sincere regard for his friend.

Utterson talks about Dr. Jekyll's will. Though the topic is distasteful to Jekyll, he hides his displeasure and jokingly sympathizes with Mr. Utterson for having a client like himself. He tells him the last time he saw a man so distressed was when Lanyon took offense at his experiments. Lanyon is a good man, he says, but a "hide-bound pedant."

Utterson tries to persuade Jekyll to change his will, but Jekyll turns pale and asks that they drop the topic. When Utterson further presses him, Jekyll says that he cannot make any changes. "My position is a strange one," he says, and "cannot be mended by talking." Utterson asks Jekyll to confide in him and offers his help. Jekyll expresses his gratitude and says that he trusts him more than "any man alive," but that he cannot discuss the matter. Then, to put his friend at ease, he says that he can get rid of Hyde anytime. He again asks Utterson to drop the matter.

Utterson is silent a moment, then reluctantly agrees. Jekyll then says that he "has a very great interest in poor Hyde" and asks that, should anything happen to himself, Utterson will ensure that Hyde is provided for. Utterson says that he cannot pretend that he will ever like Hyde, but promises to carry out Jekyll's wish.

### **Notes**

Jekyll, by "excellent good fortune," soon gives a party, to which Utterson is invited. This line is ironic, of course, but it is necessary that the reader meet Jekyll and see him as a normal and pleasant person in outward appearance. The reader further sees how welcome Utterson is as a guest and how close a friend of Dr. Jekyll he is.

In contrast to the small, unpleasant-looking, and young Hyde, Jekyll is a "large, well-made, smooth-faced man of fifty," obviously kind, sincere, and intelligent. This suggests that Hyde is only a small and not completely established part of himself. Jekyll's insistence that he can get rid of Hyde at anytime is, in retrospect chilling, for although, as the reader will learn, his initial goal in creating Hyde is to get rid of the evil in himself, Hyde will eventually take over.

Utterson again shows himself to be greatly concerned for his friend. Though, under normal circumstances, he is quiet and reserved in his friends' company, he breaks character here and presses Jekyll on the issue of the will. Not only is this unlike him, it runs against the grain of Victorian propriety. Even though Jekyll is Utterson's friend, client, and confidant, such matters would not normally be discussed.

The tone of their conversation indicates that there are deep emotions below the surface. Dr. Jekyll feels much more than he is prepared to talk about. There is clearly a strong tension between him and Lanyon, and what starts out as a lighthearted attempt to change the subject reveals a deep rift. Lanyon considers his experiments "scientific heresies," and Jekyll, in turn, has "never [been] more disappointed in any man than Lanyon." Jekyll's experiments, of course, are really at the heart of the matter. They are, however, introduced here merely as a false scent, and Utterson brushes aside this topic in a dry lawyer's manner in order to discuss what is really concerning him -- the will.

As they speak, Jekyll becomes increasingly more upset and volatile and Utterson increasingly more persistent. The scene really tells the reader nothing, since neither man is prepared to talk frankly, although both feel that they are talking about something very important and not getting through to the other. Utterson is trapped into doing something that his professional judgment abhors. This makes his position much more interesting to the reader, since the reader can see his dilemma. Stevenson will not reveal the full meaning of Jekyll's plea for justice in regard to Hyde until much later. Jekyll, of course, is not pleading for Hyde, another person, but for himself. He is afraid that he may get trapped in the identity of Hyde. Thus, the title of the chapter is ironic; Jekyll is not at ease at all, and neither is Utterson or the reader.

## **CHAPTER 4: The Carew Murder Case**

### **Summary**

Nearly a year later, a terrible crime occurs in London. A young maidservant who lives alone in her house looks out of her window before going to bed. The night is illuminated by a beautiful full moon and she feels very peaceful. She sees an "aged beautiful gentleman" walking towards a small man. The old man appears innocent and kind, and, as they speak, she recognizes the small man as Mr. Hyde, who had once visited her master and for whom she had "conceived a dislike."

Suddenly, Hyde bursts into anger, shouting and brandishing his cane. He then attacks the old man, knocks him to the ground and stamps and clubs him cruelly, audibly breaking his bones. The maid is terrified and faints.

She recovers around 2 a.m. and calls the police. They find half the stick with which Hyde had beaten the man lying in the gutter; the other half was presumably carried away by Hyde himself. A purse and a gold watch are found on the victim, along with a sealed envelope with the name and address of Mr. Utterson, but no identification.

Early the next morning, the envelope is taken to Utterson. When told the circumstances he is upset, but remains calm. He comes to see the body and identifies it as Sir Danvers Carew. The officer is surprised — "this will make a deal of noise," he says — and asks Utterson if he can offer any further help. He then tells him the details of the crime and shows him the broken walking stick.

Utterson recognizes the walking stick to be one that he had given to Dr. Jekyll many years ago. Moreover, the officer affirms that the criminal is a man of small stature and particularly wicked looking. So he is convinced that it is Hyde who has done the evil deed.

Mr. Utterson takes the officer to Hyde's house, which is in a "dismal quarter" of Soho. The maid admits them in, but says that Hyde is not at home. He had come home late at night and left an hour earlier, though she found nothing strange in that, as his habits are very irregular. Utterson asks her to let them inspect the rooms. She is about to refuse, but on being told that the officer is Inspector Newcomen from Scotland Yard, she allows them to inspect the house. She is excited and pleased that Hyde seems to be in trouble.

The house is mostly unoccupied, except for few luxuriously-appointed rooms which Hyde used. There is a good picture on the wall, which Utterson presumes is a gift from Dr. Jekyll. The rooms look as if they have been "recently and hurriedly ransacked," however, and there is a pile of ashes in the fireplace, as if a number of papers had been burned, and the remains of a checkbook. The other half of the stick is also found there. They go to the bank and discover that Hyde has several thousand pounds in his account.

The two men are convinced that the criminal is Hyde. Newcomen believes that they will be able to catch him when he goes to the bank. However, this will not be an easy job, since few people know him or know what he looks like. The only point of reference which they have is the "sense of unexpressed deformity" which everyone who saw him seemed to feel.

### **Notes**

It has not yet been revealed to the reader that Jekyll and Hyde are the same person. Thus, when Hyde murders Carew, an innocent and respectable person, Utterson is outraged at the slur on his friend's reputation (that he is involved with a proven murderer). It does not occur to him that Jekyll might be the murderer in disguise. Utterson is in a painful position, however, torn between personal feelings and professional duty. As a responsible and law abiding citizen, he carries out his duty.

Utterson goes to Hyde's house with Inspector Newcomen. The mystery is heightened by the old servant, who has an "evil face" but perfect manners. Although she is delighted that Hyde appears to be in trouble, she does not appear to be too surprised, suggesting that Hyde has done other evil deeds. "He don't seem a very popular character," says Newcomen. The discovery of the walking stick and the ransacked look of the place suggest that Hyde is indeed the murderer, although both Utterson and Newcomen are puzzled that Hyde burned his checkbook and so carelessly left the walking stick. "He must have lost his head," Newcomen says. Even though they know his identity, they despair of catching him, and the chapter ends with deepening mystery and a growing horror.

Stevenson offers many subtle character touches throughout the novel, and this chapter is no exception. The maid is "romantically given" and, before the murder, ironically feels it to be a night in which she never "thought more kindly of the world." Inspector Newcomen is shocked but also secretly pleased when he learns the identity of the victim, for he knows that the capture of the murderer will be major coup for him. Hyde's maid is delighted that Hyde is in trouble, suggesting that Hyde has hired someone as wicked as himself. Utterson remains stoic throughout, but even he is affected by the mood of events. As they drive through London in a fog on the way to Hyde's house, he becomes "conscious of some touch of that terror of the law...which at times may assail the most honest."

## **CHAPTER 5: Incident of the Letter**

### **Summary**

Late in the afternoon, Mr. Utterson visits Dr. Jekyll. He is admitted by Poole and led to the laboratory, a part of the house he has not seen before. Dr. Jekyll is gloomily sitting there looking very sick. He holds out his cold hands as a gesture of welcome to Utterson.

Utterson asks him whether he has heard about the murder, and Jekyll responds that he has. He tells him that Sir Danvers Carew was his client. He also hopes that Dr. Jekyll has not been "mad enough" to hide Hyde. Dr. Jekyll swears that he is "done with" Hyde: the latter is safe and will not be heard of again. Utterson says that he hopes this is the case, as a trial might sully Jekyll's name.

Jekyll then tells him about a letter that Hyde had hand delivered; he is not sure whether he should show it to the police, not because he cares about what happens to Hyde, but because he is worried about his own character. Utterson is surprised at his friend's selfishness, but he is somewhat relieved by it. The letter thanks Dr. Jekyll for his generosity and states that he need not worry about him, as he has a proper means of escape. Jekyll gives the letter to Utterson to do with as he wishes, as he feels that he has lost the ability to make any judgments.

When Utterson asks him if Hyde had dictated the terms of the will, Jekyll nods in affirmation. Utterson then tells him he has had a lucky escape, and Jekyll moans that he has learned a terrible lesson.

On his way out, Utterson talks to Poole, who is sure that no letters had come, except by post. This concerns Utterson, who believes that the letter may have been written in the house itself, which would make things much more delicate for Jekyll.

That evening, Utterson is sitting at home with his head clerk and most trusted companion, Mr. Guest, who is a handwriting expert, pondering whether he ought to confide in him. Finally, he decides to do so: He brings up the murder of Danvers, and Guest remarks that the murderer must have been mad. Utterson then shows him the letter, and Guest, after studying it, says that the murderer was not mad, but had "odd hand." Just then a servant enters with a letter. It is an invitation from Dr. Jekyll for dinner. Guest thinks that he recognizes the handwriting and asks if he may see it. After studying the two notes, he declares the handwriting is quite similar, only differently sloped. Utterson asks Guest not to say a word about this, and he agrees. As soon as Utterson is left alone, he locks the note in his safe. He is terrified to think that Dr. Jekyll has forged a note to protect a murderer.

### **Notes**

Stevenson takes the reader back to Jekyll now. Jekyll has managed to preserve the secrecy of his double identity. As will later be revealed, Jekyll has decided never to take the drug that turns him into Hyde again, and he assures Utterson that Hyde has disappeared forever. Regrettably, Hyde will appear again, as his character takes over Dr. Jekyll. Jekyll is indeed hiding Hyde as Utterson fears, though the latter cannot imagine the full truth of the matter.

Utterson is especially concerned about the source of the letter. If it were mailed from some distance, it would suggest that Hyde had indeed fled after the murder and perhaps need not be feared any further. If it were hand delivered, that would be worse. But Utterson learns from Poole that no mail was hand delivered, leaving him to suspect that the letter was delivered sneakily by the laboratory door or, most chillingly, that it had been written in the laboratory itself.

Utterson is a careful, methodical, and ethical lawyer, and Stevenson uses the scene with Guest to underline this. Although he has shared more secrets with Guest than any other man, he still ponders long and hard whether to share the letter with him. When he does, he reveals as few details as possible. Though Utterson trusts Guest, he does not ask the questions he wants to ask. Guest, in return, seems to guess what Utterson suspects and is afraid to ask. Out of respect for his friend and employer, he too, says no more than is absolutely necessary to convey his thoughts. When both men agree to say no more on the matter, it is perfectly clear that they are thinking the same unthinkable thing. Their conversation is a masterpiece of understatement and inference. It adds to the reader's sympathy for Utterson, who is torn between conflicting values. The evidence against his friend appears to be conclusive, yet he cannot betray him.

Is the letter truly a forgery, designed to protect Hyde, as Utterson suspects? Some readers have seen it as a foolish attempt by Jekyll to throw Utterson off the scent. Others feel that it is unlikely that Jekyll is attempting to fool or merely placate Utterson and that the letter was written in the character of Hyde. In any case, if Jekyll truly felt that Hyde were no longer a concern, the letter would not be necessary. Indeed, rather than hide Hyde, in some ways, the letter suggests a strong desire to confess. At this point, Jekyll is feeling tremendous guilt, knowing that, he, in the form of Hyde, has committed a terrible murder. That he gives Utterson what he knows

could be a crucial piece of evidence linking him, if not to the murder than at least the murderer, suggests how desperate he is feeling and how much he trusts Utterson and values his friendship.

## **CHAPTER 6: Remarkable Incident of Dr. Lanyon**

### **Summary**

The search for Hyde goes on. Thousands of pounds are offered in reward to anyone who has information on the whereabouts of Hyde. Strange tales start to emerge about his past misdeeds, but nobody knows where he presently is. Mr. Utterson gradually recovers from the shock and sorrow of Sir Danvers' murder. With Hyde gone, Dr. Jekyll recovers his health and happiness and leads an even more admirable and distinguished life than before. For more than two months, he is at peace.

Utterson visits Dr. Jekyll almost daily. On January 8th, he attends a dinner party at which Dr. Lanyon is present, and Jekyll seems overjoyed to be in the company of his old friends. Four days later, however, Utterson is turned away at the door by Poole, who says that Dr. Jekyll has gone into seclusion and is seeing no one. After being turned away several times, he goes to see Dr. Lanyon.

When he meets Lanyon, he is shocked to discover that he looks old, ill, and near death. Lanyon tells Utterson that he has had a shock from which he will never recover and that he is a doomed man, soon to die. He speaks mysteriously of having knowledge that has ruined life for him: "I sometimes think if we knew all, we should be more than glad to get away."

Utterson says that Dr. Jekyll is also ill and inquires whether Lanyon has seen him. Lanyon holds up a trembling hand and says that he does not wish speak of that man, whom he regards as dead. Utterson tries to appease Lanyon, but to no avail. He says that after he is dead, Utterson may perhaps learn the truth of the situation, but, for now, he cannot speak of it, and he asks Utterson to either change the subject or leave.

Utterson writes a letter to Dr. Jekyll complaining about the treatment he has received and asking as to the reasons for his rift with Lanyon. The next day he receives a dark, strange, and sad answer from Jekyll, saying that the break with Lanyon is unfortunate but necessary, and that, henceforth, he will lead a life of seclusion, as he has committed terrible sins and is undergoing tremendous suffering for them. He asks Utterson to allow him to go his "own dark way" and respect his silence.

Dr. Lanyon soon dies. The night after the funeral, Utterson retires to his study and opens an envelope addressed to him under Lanyon's seal. He pauses before opening the envelope, fearing that, having just buried one friend, he is about to lose another, but then breaks the seal. Inside there is an enclosure. Upon its cover, in Lanyon's hand, is a note stating that it is not to be opened until the death or disappearance of Dr. Jekyll. He is shocked at the word "disappearance," which has once again been linked with Jekyll's name. For a moment, he wishes to open and read it immediately, but his professional ethics prevents him from doing so. He puts it away in the innermost corner of his private safe.

Utterson is concerned for Jekyll and goes to visit him, but the narrator suggests that perhaps he was no longer as eager to see his friend as before, and, indeed, might almost have been relieved to speak with Poole on the steps rather than enter "that house of voluntary bondage." Poole informs Utterson that Dr. Jekyll has confined himself to the laboratory, even sleeping there sometimes, and that he is disturbed and silent. Hearing the same thing each time he returns, Utterson soon reduces the frequency of his visits.

## Notes

Dr. Lanyon might have first seemed an insignificant character, but his reactions now turn out to be very important. The sudden seclusion of Jekyll has warned the reader that something is wrong, and now the change in Lanyon is even more dramatic and foreboding. His violent, seemingly irrational response to Utterson's inquiries after Jekyll prepare the reader for some major change in Jekyll's behavior. The previous stress on their intimacy now becomes clear, for their estrangement indicates how terribly Lanyon is shocked and how far Jekyll has apparently gone. Lanyon's language might have been written off as that of a madman, had Stevenson not previously established the calm professional circles in which the three friends move. It is unlikely for them to talk rubbish or overdramatize, so the reader feels sure that something very serious has happened to Jekyll.

Utterson's professional and personal integrity now matters very much. His attempts to reconcile Lanyon with Jekyll is touching — "We three are very old friends, Lanyon; we shall not live to make others," he says. He is loyal to both men, and his fear for Jekyll is balanced by his sense of duty to Lanyon. Thus, though he is initially afraid to open Lanyon's letter, worrying that it will contain some infallible indictment of Jekyll, he does so anyway, as it would be disloyal to Lanyon not to. When he opens the letter, he finds another envelope, with the instructions that it not be opened except in the case of the death or disappearance of Jekyll. The temptation to know how Hyde is connected with Lanyon's death, as well as Jekyll's aberrations, would have been too much for any average man to resist. However, Utterson is not an average man, and he reluctantly puts away the document. This act, in addition to highlighting Utterson's character, also allows Stevenson to prolong the mystery a bit longer. The reader and Utterson both can only watch helplessly as Jekyll descends into his old bad habits and strange behavior.

In terms of the larger story, the two-month period during which Jekyll is at peace represents the time during which he tries to keep Hyde at bay and repent of his ill-deeds following the murder. In a sense, Hyde *is* gone, and his "disappearance" allows Jekyll to regain some sense of himself. When Hyde reemerges, Jekyll throws himself into seclusion. At this point, the reader does not know what it is that has affected Lanyon so terribly. This will be revealed in chapter nine, where Utterson learns that Lanyon had discovered that Jekyll was Hyde.

## CHAPTER 7: Incident at the Window

### Summary

One Sunday, Enfield and Utterson are walking again when they come to the strange door at which the story began. Enfield, who has by now, of course, like the rest of London, heard all about Mr. Hyde, says that the story is at least at an end, and Utterson expresses the hope that it is. He tells him that he once saw Mr. Hyde and felt the same sense of revulsion as did Enfield, but does not say anything more of what he knows. Enfield reveals that he has learned that the door is, indeed, the back entrance of Jekyll's house, and he chastises Utterson for withholding the information.

Utterson says that he is concerned about Dr. Jekyll and feels that the presence of a friend might help him. As they step into the courtyard, they look up and see Dr. Jekyll sitting at one of the windows, looking like "some disconsolate prisoner." Utterson tells him that he should not stay inside so much. Jekyll seems pleased to see his friends, but says that he cannot admit them up. He is happy, however, to talk to them from the window. Suddenly, his face changes, becoming so horrible and miserable that they are terrified. They have only a brief glimpse of it, however, before the window is shut.

They both walk on, too terrified to talk. Only when they come to a busy part of the street does Utterson dare to look at his companion. "God forgive us," he says. Enfield nods his head seriously and they walk on in silence.

## Notes

This is a compact and significant scene. Its setting is the street before the back of Jekyll's house, where the mystery began. Most of what the reader knows so far is through the observations of Utterson and Enfield, with only a few interjections by the narrator. They are sharp and observant men, and thus it is horrifying when their conversation with Dr. Jekyll, which is bright and almost normal, suddenly turns sour. Something horrible has indeed happened — or is happening — to Dr. Jekyll, and Enfield and Utterson are unwilling witnesses to it. "God forgive us," Utterson says when he is able to talk, and Enfield just nods silently. The two men, of course, have seen the beginning of the transformation of Jekyll into Hyde, although Stevenson does not yet reveal this information to the reader. Stevenson's intention is to prolong the suspense, and this scene helps him to achieve that intention excellently.

## CHAPTER 8: The Last Night

### Summary

Mr. Utterson is sitting by the fireside one evening when Poole visits him. Utterson offers him a glass of wine and tries to engage him calmly, but he is very frightened and agitated and asks Utterson to go with him to the house. When they arrive, Utterson is surprised to see Jekyll's servants gathered together in fright. A maidservant weeps loudly. Poole leads Utterson toward the laboratory, but warns him that if his master asks him in, he should not go.

Poole knocks on door to the "cabinet," or study, and announces Utterson. Jekyll replies that he cannot see anyone. Poole asks Utterson if the voice sounds like Jekyll's, and Utterson agrees that it does not. Poole fears that his master has been murdered; eight days ago he heard Jekyll cry out in the name of God, and ever since this strange voice has been there. Utterson is disturbed, but says that he doubts the murderer would remain in the room.

Poole says that the man in the cabinet, whoever he is, has been crying for medicine for the past eight days and, as Jekyll sometimes did, leaving orders on the stairs. Poole has been sent to various chemists in town in search of that medicine, but each time he is told that it is not pure and is sent out again. He shows Utterson a message written to one of the chemists. The message runs "composedly enough," asking for a batch of a certain drug previously purchased and noting that the most recent sample was impure, but it ends with a scrawled plea; "For God's sake, find me some of the old."

Utterson thinks that it looks like Jekyll's handwriting. Poole is inclined to agree, but says that the handwriting doesn't matter — he has seen the man. He came upon him one day when he was in one of the adjoining rooms, probably in search of the drug. When he saw Poole, he shrieked and went back into the cabinet. If he was Dr. Jekyll, why did he act as he did, and why was he wearing a mask? Utterson concludes that perhaps Dr. Jekyll is suffering from one of those maladies which "torture and deform" a person and can only be cured, perhaps, by a particular drug. He expresses the hope that there is a cure and that Dr. Jekyll will recover. Poole is certain that the man was not Dr. Jekyll; after all, this was a dwarf, while Dr. Jekyll is a tall, fine man, and, after twenty years, he should know his master.

Utterson finally agrees to break down the door, to Poole's relief. As they prepare to do so, Utterson asks if he knows who it was that he saw, and Poole replies that he thinks it was Mr. Hyde, as he felt that certain chill that people feel when they see him. He is "book-learned" enough to realize that this isn't evidence, but his feelings say otherwise.



They break down the door and enter. The room is quiet and orderly, except for the dead and still-twitching body of Mr. Hyde, dressed in the too-large clothes of Dr. Jekyll. In his hand is a crushed vial, which leads Utterson to conclude that he has committed suicide.

They search for Jekyll but do not find him. Poole fears that he is dead and buried somewhere on the premises. Utterson wonders if he has fled, but the cellar door is covered with cobwebs and the back door is shut and locked, its key lying broken and rusty on the ground. On one table are piles of the drug he had sent for, and on one of the shelves is a religious book which Jekyll had held in high esteem, but in which Utterson finds blasphemies which appear to be written in Jekyll's hand.

On Jekyll's business table, they find a large envelope addressed to Utterson. In it is a new copy of Jekyll's will, which names Utterson as his benefactor. Utterson is astonished, and he wonders why Hyde had not destroyed the document. There is also a note in Jekyll's hand dated that same day. Utterson speculates that Jekyll might have killed Hyde and then fled, and he fears for his reputation and safety. At Poole's urging, he reads the note. The note says that Utterson should read the letter Dr. Lanyon had given to him, and then, if he "[cares] to hear more," he should read his enclosed confession." Utterson asks Poole to remain silent on the matter of the note so that if Jekyll has fled, they may at least save his reputation. He tells him that after going home to read the documents, he will return, and then he and Poole will call for the police.

## Notes

The pace of the narrative now speeds up as Stevenson prepares to reveal the details behind the mystery. Poole arrives at Utterson's door in an agitated state. He fears for his master and knows that Utterson is a loyal, trustworthy friend. Therefore, it is natural for him to seek his help at a time of crisis. Poole has served Dr. Jekyll faithfully for twenty years. Therefore, when Hyde speaks, he is sure that the voice is not his master's. Poole is the chief servant in status and in character. He disciplines the other servants, but he respectfully leads Utterson to the house and allows him to give orders as befits his social class. (It would be improper, of course, for him to break down his master's door himself.) The grotesque normality and propriety of the scene underline the abnormality of what lies behind the door in the study.

Stevenson handles the scene well, offering the reader hints as to what is going on behind the door without giving too much away. The reader knows that the voice is Hyde's and not Jekyll's, but neither character wants to admit it. Poole is certain that his master has been murdered. Utterson, as befits his station and his character, keeps trying to offer rational explanations for what is going on, but is finally convinced that Jekyll has been harmed and decides to break down the door. Inside the cabinet, they find the body of Mr. Hyde. The mystery is only partially solved, however, because nobody knows what has happened to Jekyll. They do not find his body, of course, since Jekyll and Hyde were one. In his last moments, the composite being was Hyde. His last words were as Hyde. Hyde committed suicide. Jekyll/Hyde died as Hyde.

The description of the study heightens the sense of mystery. The room is fairly orderly, yet there are signs that things are not right. The men wonder at the drug laid out as if for an experiment and the purpose of the full length mirror and what it might have beheld. As they search, the silence is broken by the sudden boiling over of a kettle. There appears to be no way out of the study. (In the last chapter, it will be revealed that Jekyll intentionally broke Hyde's key to the laboratory.) Certain clues, of course, suggest the dual nature of Jekyll and Hyde. The blasphemous commentary in the religious book, written by Hyde, stands in stark contrast to Jekyll's esteem for the book. The diminutive Hyde appears in Jekyll's clothes. The changed will remains intact, something Hyde would have never allowed, and there is a note addressed to Utterson written that same day. In his last moments, there was a furious struggle between the two elements in Dr. Jekyll.

The reader finds that Utterson again exercises tremendous self-control. He is almost too rational, refusing to be caught up in Poole's understandable fear and taking a long time to be convinced that anything is amiss. Even after he breaks into the room and finds the envelope addressed to him, he decides to go home to read the documents in private rather than find out the answers then and there. As much as he fears and suspects, he will not make any judgments until he has looked at all the evidence at hand.

## **CHAPTER 9: Dr. Lanyon's Narrative**

### **Summary**

On January 9, the day after Jekyll's final dinner party, Dr. Lanyon receives a letter from Dr. Jekyll requesting him to go to his laboratory and take a drawer, which contains some drugs, from his cabinet. At midnight, a man will arrive and asks for the contents. If he wants an explanation, he shall then receive one, but he asks Lanyon not to fail him, as his life and soul may depend on it.

Dr. Lanyon believes that Jekyll is insane, but he brings home the drawer, which contains some powders and a strange notebook. Around midnight, a strange person appears. He is dressed in clothes that are far too large for him and there is something "abnormal and misbegotten in the very essence" of his appearance. He is anxious to get at the contents of the drawer. When Lanyon bids him to sit, he apologizes for his behavior and thanks Lanyon for his help, but he can barely control himself. Upon looking into the drawer, he lets out an immense sob of relief, and then composedly asks for a graduated glass. He prepares a mixture in Lanyon's presence. Before drinking it he offers Lanyon the choice to stay and watch, and behold a "new province of knowledge," or leave and remain unchanged. Lanyon is unimpressed and decides to remain.

His visitor then mocks Lanyon's close-mindedness and drinks the potion. A cry follows. He turns red and clutches the table. His face turns black, and his features alter. Suddenly there is a total transformation. There stands Dr. Jekyll. Lanyon screams in terror. Lanyon relates that over the next hour, Jekyll told him his story, and his "soul sickened" at what was revealed. Lanyon is still incredulous and fears that he cannot live much longer. The last thing he wishes to convey to Utterson is that the "creature" who entered his house that night, was, by Jekyll's own confession, Hyde, the murderer of Sir Danvers Carew.

### **Notes**

The day after Jekyll's dinner party, Lanyon receives a letter from him with a strange request. (Careful readers may note that the letter is dated December 10; this a minor error.) Upon reading it, Lanyon is convinced that his friend is insane, but he does as he his bid. The chemicals and notes he finds mean nothing to him, but they whet his curiosity and explain why he is so keen to watch the experiment later. Actually, it would have been better for him to continue in ignorance.

His next ordeal is to meet Hyde. He is more disgusted with him than is anyone else. This tells the reader a good deal about his self-control and also about his regard for Jekyll, because he is willing to help him even when faced with this strange and loathsome friend of his.

As will be revealed in the final chapter, Jekyll, while away from home one day, finds himself suddenly transformed into Mr. Hyde, without the intervention of the drug. He had previously broken Hyde's key to the back door of the lab, and he fears that if he returns home, he will be turned in by his servants. Hyde despises Jekyll, but knows he must be able to change back into him if he is to avoid capture. Thus, he writes the letter to Lanyon asking him to obtain the drug he needs to change back into Jekyll.

In this chapter, the reader gets the first detailed picture of Hyde, the hunted criminal. His size is small compared to that of the virtuous Jekyll, and he would appear comic in his oversize dress if not for his evil presence and manner. He is shrewd and rational, but can control his passions only with great difficulty. The scene where he prepares to take the potion is masterfully drawn. Stevenson has hinted several times that Jekyll and Lanyon have had an ongoing scientific dispute. Lanyon never reveals how much he knew of Jekyll's experiments, but it is clear that they shared fundamental differences and that Lanyon considered Jekyll's theories foolish, if not evil. Jekyll, in turn, must have chafed at what he regarded as Lanyon's conservatism and close-mindedness. As Hyde, all of Jekyll's buried resentments come out, showing that the scientific ambition, which drove him to such an experiment, has not been extinguished even by the experience of being Hyde. Hyde mocks Lanyon and gloats at the thought of both shocking him and putting him in his place by revealing to him the success of his experiments. His action is also leveled at Jekyll, for Jekyll tried to protect his friends from his secret and himself from the humiliation its revelation would have caused.

The language of the chapter as it approaches the explanation of mystery becomes more and more melodramatic. This is not a fault on Stevenson's part, but rather evidence that Lanyon's power to keep control over himself is fading. To write about the terrible scene brings back his hysteria, and his style verges on the unhealthy. Some readers have seen his death as the result of the terrible shock he received at realizing that Jekyll and Hyde were one and that his friend was capable, on some level, of being an evil murderer. Others have gone further and suggested that Lanyon's death was not so much the result of realizing that Jekyll was evil or contained evil in him but that Jekyll's experiments revealed the possibility of evil in all people. Seen in this light, his slow withering away is a form of self-denial. In any case, his death following the incident with Jekyll/Hyde is easy to understand. Despite his scientific curiosity, he is limited and ultimately destroyed by a somewhat naive and circumscribed worldview.

## **CHAPTER 10 : Henry Jekyll's Full Statement of the Case**

### **Summary**

In this chapter, Henry Jekyll tells the reader his life's story. He was born to a large fortune. He was intelligent and industrious, but also had a certain "impatient gaiety of disposition." This might not have bothered other men, but it clashed with his desire to be serious and respectable. By the time he was an adult, he realized that he was living a duplicitous life and was shamed by his "irregularities."

He soon realizes the duality of man's nature. He believes that if he could separate these qualities, "the unjust might go his way...and the just could walk steadfastly and securely," without being tempted by evil or suffering internal struggles. He eventually manages to compound a drug with the intended effects.

Upon taking it, he feels horrible. Then suddenly he feels "younger, lighter and happier." He sees "disordered sensual images"; he feels wicked and evil, yet, at the same time, delighted and intoxicated. Upon seeing himself in a mirror, he realizes that he had lost his stature. Jekyll now reflects that Hyde's small size was due to the evil portion of him being less developed than the good. As he continues to look in the mirror, he realizes that he is staring at the face of pure evil, yet he is not repulsed. Indeed, he feels even more spirited than normal. He then takes the antidote to conclude his experiment. He realizes that, as Hyde, he is purely evil, while as Jekyll, he is still the same admixture of good and evil as he was before and as, indeed, is everyone else.

He is tempted to experience life as Hyde. In this disguise, he is free to haunt the lonely, narrow corners of London and seek out "undignified" pleasures without fear of recognition or recrimination. He sets up Hyde in a separate house, orders his servants to obey him, and, after the incident with the child, opens a bank account in his name. He is appalled by his behavior, but he does not stop. He believes that he is "beyond the reach of fate."

One morning, however, he wakes up in the shape of Hyde and undergoes a brief period of fear before he can get the drug to transform himself back. He realizes that his evil nature is growing stronger and is in danger of gaining the upper hand. As he wonders what to do, he reflects that, as Jekyll, the composite man, he will miss all the pleasures that Hyde indulged in, while as Hyde, although he will lose all that Jekyll possesses — friends, hopes, respect, etc., — he will hardly notice the loss. Jekyll fears for Hyde, but Hyde does not care in the least about Jekyll. Frightened, he determines to cast off the nature of Hyde.

For two months, Jekyll lives the life of the respected doctor. Yet he does not get rid of Hyde's clothes nor give up his house. Finally, he allows himself to assume the shape of Hyde again. And on that occasion, full of an overpowering lust to do evil, he murders Sir Danvers Carew. He is filled with delight at the act, but at the same time terrified that he will be captured. He returns to his house in Soho, burns his papers, and, with "a song upon his lips," toasts the dead man and swallows the transforming potion.

Jekyll, in a fit of remorse and gratitude, renews his effort to abandon the nature of Hyde. He locks the back door to the laboratory and breaks the key. The next day, he learns that Hyde is being sought, and he is grateful to have this additional pressure to keep him in check. He redoubles his efforts to do good and enjoys his life, but, although he keeps his vow not to become Hyde, his dark side begins to "growl for license."

Sitting in the park one day, he suddenly changes to Hyde. Realizing that he is in danger, he decides to enlist Lanyon's help in getting the drugs that will transform him back. Upon returning to himself, he realizes that he is no longer afraid of the gallows; he is afraid of "the horror of being Hyde." He returns home as if in a dream.

Thereafter, the nature of Hyde begins to assert itself constantly, and Jekyll must continually take the drug to revert back to himself. As time goes on, he becomes weaker and sicker as Hyde seems to grow stronger. Jekyll is appalled that he has this evil within him. Hyde, in turn, detests Jekyll for his weakness and resents having to enter into his body for his safety. To get at Jekyll, he burns his papers, destroys the picture of his father, and scrawls blasphemies in his books. Ironically, while Jekyll grows weary of life, Hyde is filled with a passion for it and fears that Jekyll may kill him by committing suicide.

About a week before writing this note, Jekyll's supply of drugs begins to run low, and he sends out for a fresh batch. The new drugs fail to work, however, and Jekyll realizes that there must have been some unknown impurity in the first batch which been responsible for the transformation. He is currently writing, as Jekyll, under the effects of the last of his old supply of drugs. He knows that Hyde, too, has been crushed, and he imagines him pacing in fear behind the door, awaiting capture. He wonders whether Hyde will allow himself to be hung or if he will kill himself first. He does not care: Hyde is another, and these last moments that he is Jekyll are the "true hour" of his death.

## **Notes**

In this final chapter, which is the most substantial in the story, Stevenson writes from the point of view of the protagonist, Dr. Henry Jekyll. Jekyll completes and seals his account just before his personality is taken over by his alter ego, Mr. Hyde.

The first two pages are concerned with Jekyll's upbringing, character, education, and philosophy. Realizing the conflicting passions that exist within himself, he becomes convinced of the dual nature of humankind. "Man is not truly one, but truly two." This motivates him to experiment and discover a medicine that can separate the

two aspects within himself. Through Jekyll, Stevenson suggests that everybody has a Mr. Hyde locked up within themselves.

Utterson, Lanyon, and Jekyll are prosperous professional men. They enjoy each other's company, but they do not have their own families. They have sacrificed a part of their personalities to their careers, and therefore they have gained eminence at an early age. For Jekyll, this is not enough. He has unfulfilled desires and passions, some of them quite dark. As Hyde, he can do what is socially unacceptable and then reappear as Jekyll, with his reputation intact. He considers this a wonderful and scientific way to get freedom from the limitations imposed by society.

When Jekyll first sees Hyde, he experiences "no repugnance, [but] rather...a leap of welcome." Though the new being is smaller, it is recognizable as something long present and known. The drug does not make Jekyll evil; it merely releases the repressed evil side within him. This acknowledgment of the possibilities of human nature gives the tale its modern edge and elevates it from being a mere mystery story or "shocker."

Hyde is a monster, composed of pure evil. Other characters recognize this at some level and are thus repulsed, even if they cannot articulate the reason for their reactions. Some critics hold that Stevenson is suggesting that this revulsion is not due merely to people being afraid of the evil that Hyde represents, but of the evil within themselves. Certainly, Jekyll is horrified by this aspect within himself, although he is also curious and eager to explore it. This exploration of his evil side is all too believable and thus chilling. Jekyll is aghast at Hyde's actions, but he continues to become Hyde. He even opens a bank account and sets up a residence for his alter ego, so that he might move more freely. Jekyll is able to compartmentalize his experience by transferring his guilt onto Hyde. However, this will soon prove dangerous.

Hyde perhaps might appear somewhat tame as monsters go to the modern reader. Stevenson does not state explicitly the foul deeds that Hyde engages in, though it is likely that most of these "undignified" pleasures probably extended to nothing more than engaging in carnal lusts. Of course, Victorian morality held a dim view of sex and sexual expression, and it would have been considered improper for the respectable Dr. Jekyll to be openly visiting brothels. That Stevenson does not say exactly what Jekyll did fires the imagination, but as Jekyll openly confesses to his acts of violence — knocking down the girl, killing Sir Danvers, and hitting a woman later — it is unlikely that he committed any other acts which the contemporary mind might find abhorrent. He is certainly no Jack the Ripper. Of course, what makes Hyde evil and frightening is the pleasure he takes from his evil acts. When Hyde kills Sir Danvers, it is not merely an act of blind rage; he thoroughly enjoys it. When he comes to his senses, he feels no remorse, but only wishes to escape punishment.

And Jekyll contains Hyde. When Hyde emerges on his own, Jekyll is terrified. He decides to be good, however, not for moral reasons but because it is easier and less dangerous to do so. As much as he is horrified and remorseful for Hyde's actions, Jekyll ultimately does not want to lose his friends, riches, and respectability. The morally correct decision is easy, and perhaps too easy, for Jekyll admits in retrospect: "I choose the better part, and was found wanting in the strength to keep it." Jekyll's good intentions last for two months, but then he drinks the drug again. Stevenson does not make it clear whether he does so voluntarily or is urged by internal probing from a submerged Hyde "struggling after freedom." In either case, this time Hyde comes out in full strength and brutally murders Sir Danvers. When Jekyll renounces Hyde for the second time, the decision is again ambiguous. Jekyll even goes so far as to say that he is glad Hyde killed such a well-known person, for now that Hyde is being hunted, it will be much less tempting to become him. Self-preservation and good intentions go hand in hand, and Jekyll is thus able to be good and self-gratifying at the same time.

But Jekyll can no longer control what he has released. The next time he becomes Hyde, it is not due to voluntarily taking the drug. A mere weakening of moral attitude, as he sits in the park, is enough, and Jekyll's alter ego springs back in full control. From now on, the story rapidly approaches its climax. Hyde's power grows steadily, and the transformations take place without Jekyll's control. Ironically, while Hyde wishes to take over from Jekyll, Hyde needs Jekyll, for without the ability to hide behind Jekyll's skin, Hyde would soon be arrested and hung for murder. Finally, the drug runs short, and Hyde's final triumph appears imminent. The final triumph, however, is short-lived, for Hyde, fearing capture, commits suicide shortly following Jekyll's completion of his account. Both characters are linked to each other and belong to each other, and, as Jekyll ultimately learns, he cannot destroy Hyde without also destroying himself.

## OVERALL ANALYSES

### CHARACTER ANALYSIS

#### *Dr. Jekyll*

Dr. Jekyll is the protagonist of the novel. He is an intelligent, tall, and dignified man of late middle age. The people who know him respect him. He is a wealthy man and lives in comfort in a good house with loyal servants. On the surface, he is the epitome of the Victorian gentleman. But he has a dark side, and he harbors secret passions.

Seeing himself as a model, he becomes convinced that humans are composed of both good and evil parts, and he devises a drug to separate these components. By taking the drug, he is able to turn into Hyde, the evil part of himself. He is aghast at seeing first-hand this evil part of himself, but a part of him is delighted too. Under the guise of Hyde, he is able to indulge in evil deeds and pleasures without fear of repercussions. He even sets up Hyde with a house and bank account, the better to protect his own reputation as Jekyll. There is a part of Jekyll that clearly enjoys the experiences that Hyde gives him. One day, however, he wakes to discover that he has changed into Hyde without taking the drug, and he realizes that Hyde is becoming stronger. From then on, he is engaged in a continual struggle with the evil part of his nature. For two months he avoids taking the drug, but at last the temptation is too great, and Hyde returns with a vengeance, killing Sir Danvers Carew that same night. Once again, Jekyll swears off the drug, but it is too late. The next time he becomes Hyde, it is due to a mere momentary weakening in moral attitude as he sits on a park bench. Now he must take the drug continually just to become Jekyll, and, when he runs out of it, he realizes that he has fought a losing battle with himself. But he does achieve a sort of victory over Hyde at the end. Realizing that he will soon turn into Hyde for the last time, he declares his life over — anything that happens after that point on will not happen to him, as Jekyll will be truly dead to the world. Therefore, it will be Hyde and Hyde alone who will either have to face justice or find the courage to kill himself. It is a grim and tragic victory, but a victory nonetheless.

#### *Mr. Hyde*

Hyde is Jekyll's alter ego, a cruel and strange man totally devoid of morality and conscience. He is short and ugly and causes everyone he meets to be filled with revulsion. Utterson is unable to understand why Dr. Jekyll has willed his property to him, and he thus suspects that Dr. Jekyll is being blackmailed by Hyde.

Hyde, the evil part of Jekyll, has come into physical existence as the result of the drug that Dr. Jekyll has compounded and taken. At first, Hyde is a small, somewhat powerless being, who can spring into existence only at Jekyll's pleasure. Jekyll himself notes that Hyde's youth and small stature are the result of having little exercised the evil part of himself. The more Jekyll allows himself to experience life as Hyde, however, the more powerful Hyde becomes. Eventually, Hyde will be able to emerge without the aid of the drug at all.

He commits several offenses, the worst being the murder of Sir Danvers Carew. After that he is a hunted criminal. Hyde feels no remorse for the crimes he commits, nor does he have any feelings of compassion for his other half, Dr. Jekyll. While Jekyll looks upon Hyde with some sense of concern, to Hyde, Jekyll is a nuisance whose presence is tolerated only so far as he is a means of self-preservation. If Hyde were not being pursued by the police and in need of a safe identity, he would have no use for Jekyll at all.

Hyde acts primarily out of passion, not reason. After murdering Carew, he leaves half the murder weapon in the street by Carew's body and the other half at his residence. This acts as evidence against him and causes nearly all of London to be on the lookout for him. At the same time, Hyde has a keener instinct of self-preservation than does Dr. Jekyll and a keener sense of life. For this reason, it is difficult for Jekyll to get rid of Hyde. In the end, however, Hyde causes his own destruction. Realizing that there is no more of the drug that can turn him into Jekyll and fearing capture, Hyde kills himself.

### ***Mr. Utterson***

Mr. Utterson is a successful lawyer and a close friend of Dr. Jekyll. He is methodical, rational, and somewhat mechanical, and his self-control is almost superhuman. He is sparing of speech, minds his own business, and has nothing to do with other people's personal affairs. He is purely a legal advisor, not a moral one. In exceptional circumstances, however, he does try to find out details about other persons, as in his search for Hyde. Despite his dry appearance, Utterson proves himself to be an honest and sincere friend who does everything to help Jekyll. He is so rational and pragmatic, however, that he cannot imagine that Jekyll might be guilty.

When Utterson is torn between personal feelings and professional ethics, the reader sees him as a sincere professional carrying out his duty meticulously. Despite his fears, he does not reveal to Guest any more than is absolutely necessary. Utterson is shocked and terrified to see Dr. Jekyll suddenly changing, but he does not discuss it with Enfield. Although he is curious to read the note that Dr. Lanyon has left, he sincerely follows the instructions of his dead client and puts it aside.

Utterson learns in the end, of course, that Jekyll and Hyde are one, but the reader never gets to discover what his reaction is. Rather Stevenson presents the documents that Utterson reads. It is likely, however, given Utterson's realistic nature, open mind, and good heart, that whatever revulsion he would have felt upon discovering that Jekyll was Hyde, he would have also had sympathy for the tragic end of his friend as well.

### ***Dr. Lanyon***

Dr. Lanyon is a wealthy and respected doctor and an old friend of Utterson and Jekyll. However, his relationship with Dr. Jekyll is strained because he does not favor the scientific research that Jekyll is doing. He does not like to interfere in other people's affairs, however, and, when Utterson tries to get information from him regarding Jekyll, he refuses to discuss the reasons for their falling out. Even when he discovers Jekyll's identity as Hyde, he protects his friend. The note he leaves Utterson is not to be read unless Jekyll disappears or dies.

Despite his noteworthy qualities, Lanyon is somewhat close-minded and unrealistic. When he discovers that Jekyll is Hyde, he is unable to bear the shock, either because he cannot accept that Jekyll could contain such evil or that such evil could exist in any man, including, perhaps, himself. In any case, he loses faith in life and humanity and soon dies.

### ***Mr. Enfield***

Enfield is Utterson's cousin. Unlike the reserved Utterson, Enfield is a "man about town." Despite their outward differences, the two gentlemen are friends, and both share a certain formality in behavior and respect for the privacy of others. Neither man is given to sharing confidences, yet Enfield finds the story of Hyde so strange that he does confide in Utterson regarding what he has witnessed. After discussing the story, both men agree not to refer to Hyde again. Later, when they witness the beginning of the transformation of Jekyll into Hyde, they are again both reluctant to discuss what they have seen. Like Utterson, Enfield is reluctant to pass judgment.

Enfield is a perceptive man too. He notices certain details of the house Hyde enters; for example, that the windows, though shut, are kept clean. He also remembers the details of the night that Hyde trampled the girl. In spite of being very observant, he does not gossip or talk about irrelevant matters. He does not reveal the name that was on the check that Hyde gave the girl's family. In short, he comes across as a reliable witness to events.

### ***Poole***

Poole is faithful servant of Dr. Jekyll and has nothing but love for his master. He shows tremendous concern for Jekyll when he locks himself in his laboratory. He visits all the chemists in town on his master's instructions, in search of the drugs he needs. When he feels that his master's life is in danger, he immediately rushes to Utterson for help. Poole is not as educated as Utterson, and thus, in Utterson's eyes, is more likely to be subject to superstitious fears, but Poole manages to convince Utterson to break down the laboratory door, something he, as a servant, could not properly do himself. Of course, Poole is right; something has happened to Jekyll, though neither he nor Utterson could possibly guess exactly what has happened. Thus, Poole has some admirable virtues by which he endears himself to his master and to the reader

### ***Guest***

Guest is Utterson's chief clerk and a handwriting expert. He points out the strong similarity between Jekyll's and Hyde's handwriting, taking the reader deeper into the mystery. He and Utterson trust each other, yet, despite sharing confidences, they are both discreet in their conversation, saying no more than what is absolutely necessary to each other. Utterson does not mention his fear for Jekyll, and Guest does not accuse Jekyll of forgery or worse, yet each man knows what the other is thinking. Their entire scene together is a masterpiece of understatement and inference.

## **PLOT STRUCTURE ANALYSIS**

In one sense, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is a novel of discovery, and hence its structure is appropriate to a novel of discovery. The first chapter, in which Enfield narrates to Utterson the incident of Hyde's trampling of a girl, serves as an exposition for the entire novel. Utterson's discovery that the man stipulated in Jekyll's will is apparently a cruel monster will send him in search of Hyde and lead to the rise in action of the plot.

Utterson, as he explores the strange relationship between Jekyll and Hyde, is the filter through which the reader receives much of the tale. Although he is an eyewitness to many important events, there is much information that he cannot or does not obtain. Thus, for most of the novel, the reader only knows what he knows. What Utterson cannot know, Stevenson only hints at. The reader thus participates in the mystery in much the same way that Utterson does.

The climax of the novel is reached through the catastrophe that annihilates Jekyll and Hyde together. Hyde, fearing capture, commits suicide, and Poole and Utterson find his still-twitching body. There is no sign of



Jekyll, however. Poole and Utterson are utterly confused, and the reader is left to wonder and piece the story together so far. The action falls in the final two chapters as the mystery is revealed.

The outcome of the protagonist's transformation from Jekyll to Hyde is tragic. Jekyll finds it impossible to overcome Hyde's hold on him; thus, his scientific discovery, which should have been an act of triumph, leads to his tragic death.

## **THEMES - THEME ANALYSIS**

### **Major Theme**

Stevenson's novel psychologically explores the dual nature of the human personality. It suggests a co-existence in the human body and soul of goodness, morality, and idealism along with evil, depravity, and sadism.

Stevenson's protagonist, Dr. Jekyll, manages to isolate and separate his evil side from the whole, creating in the process two very different people; Jekyll, who represents not pure good, but the whole of a person, and Hyde, who represents pure evil, and contains little, if any, of Jekyll in him. These two characters stand in stark contrast to one another; both Stevenson, through the novel, and Jekyll, in his narration of events, depict them as separate beings with separate motivations. Yet, they are inevitably synthesized into one being. At times, it is hard to separate the two characters apart, and this is Stevenson's intention. Does Jekyll, for example, take the drug after he has forsworn it because he secretly yearns to be Hyde but cannot or will not admit it, or does he do so because Hyde is simply too powerful? Is Jekyll responsible for Hyde's behavior? And is there any measure of Jekyll in Hyde that acts as a check upon Hyde? The simplest explanation is that Jekyll, as a composite being, has both good and evil in him, and his ill-deeds and mistakes in judgment are due to the influence of the evil side. Yet the reader need not fully accept Jekyll's explanation, and it is unlikely that for Stevenson, the problem was fully resolved. *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* explores the nature of the human soul, but it does not offer any easy answers.

This refusal to judge on Stevenson's part is part of what makes the novel so powerful. Jekyll/Hyde is at once both agonized and glorious. Hyde is a part of Jekyll, and Jekyll cannot fully renounce him without losing a part of himself. Jekyll also enjoys experiencing the vices that Hyde indulges in. Stevenson is realistic in presenting a contrast between the human emotions and reactions in the two selves of his protagonist. The two living figures exist not only within the printed pages of Stevenson's novel but within ourselves. For over a century, this realistic novel has left readers stunned and disturbed about what lurks within the caverns of their own souls.

### **Minor Theme**

The problem of evil is a significant minor theme in the novel. Stevenson suggest that evil may be more native to man than good. Hyde experiences delirious freedom and joy in his abandonment to licentiousness. Jekyll, meanwhile, suffers the pangs of age and rigors of self-control. Jekyll eventually loses the power to control his evil self, but it is a loss of power he has willingly courted.

The evil Hyde is a man with distorted frame and ugly countenance. He carries an emanation about him, which is the very substance of evil. Hyde has no motive whatsoever for his brutal trampling of the girl and the trampling of Carew. His very existence seems to arise out of the magical blackness of hell, but, of course, it emanates from a respectable London doctor, and thus, potentially, from anyone.

Stevenson was writing before the advent of psychology, and thus had no language with which to talk about repression, sublimation, or denial, terms, which come much more easily to the modern reader. Yet a clear subtext in his work is the repression and denial of the existence of evil.

Hyde's name is appropriate, for he truly hides and is hidden by Jekyll. Jekyll's name is appropriate too; Stevenson meant for it to be pronounced as if it were French — Je KILL. "Je" in French means "I," thus Jekyll was hoping to kill off his hidden, evil self. Everyone Hyde meets is repulsed by the evil that emanates from him, but part of this revulsion is assuredly the unwillingness to accept that the evil that Hyde represents is present in them as well. Lanyon is an extreme example of what happens to one who is unwilling to accept the existence of evil as a primal, universal force. He falls out with Jekyll over his experiments, and, when he discovers that Jekyll and Hyde are one, the shock is too great for him and he dies. Even the calm, dispassionate Utterson and his equally rational friend Enfield are unwilling to entertain the truth. When he and Enfield witness the beginning of Jekyll's transformation into Hyde, they walk hurriedly away. Neither man wishes to speak about what they have just witnessed.

### **The Moral Problem of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde***

The story of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* represents a conflict between good and evil. One's character, suggests Stevenson, is determined by their capacity to keep evil impulses in check. In some, this capacity is strong; in others it is weak. In this novel are four men of similar character and social standing, Mr. Utterson, Mr. Enfield, Dr. Lanyon, and Dr. Jekyll, who should be quite capable of subduing their evil impulses. But Dr. Jekyll fails to do so, and the novel is the story of his failure.

Only vigorous personalities are capable of either the heights of virtue or the depths of vice, and Dr. Jekyll is such a personality. In him, both the good and the evil tendencies of human nature are very strong. His descent into extreme evil is due to the fact that he has a very high standard of virtue. He is determined to keep the two sides of his nature completely apart. But in isolating his evil side, he dooms himself.

Stevenson seems to anticipate in his invention the modern psychological theory of the split personality. However, there is a difference. According to psychology, the different personalities of a person so affected act independently and unknowingly of one another. Whereas in the case of Dr. Jekyll, his second personality is a conscious creation brought into being willfully. Hyde is purely evil and seems to contain no part of Jekyll. Yet he acknowledges Jekyll's existence, however grudgingly. Jekyll, meanwhile, recognizes that Hyde is a part of himself, albeit a small, less developed part.

Stevenson suggests that once one gives free rein to their evil tendencies, there is no going back. Indeed, as soon as Dr. Jekyll creates Edward Hyde, he starts on a journey to utter moral downfall. He loses contact first with his good side and then with his friends. The more he plays at being Hyde the more he is cut off from their good influence. Finally becoming Hyde is no longer a matter of choice. The suggestion is that evil may start as a servant, but ultimately it becomes the master and destroys all the good in a person.

Stevenson has added a touch of irony by depicting that the initial effectiveness of the drug is due to an impurity contained in the powder used. The pure powder that is later available is incapable of bringing about the transformation. Perhaps Stevenson wants to suggest that only evil can issue from evil.

Dr. Jekyll's will is weak, and he thus succumbs to the temptation of indulging his evil tendencies. Each time he indulges his evil side, it becomes stronger. *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* thus powerfully emphasizes the great importance of will in the human character. It also points out that one should resist the first approach of evil. If a person yields an inch, the evil will cover a mile. Yet Stevenson's purpose is ultimately not moralistic, and he

conveys this message in an unobtrusive, but convincing manner. His primary goal is to thrill and entertain, and to let the reader find their own lesson. It is no wonder that novel met with such initial success and contributed to Stevenson's rising fame. Stevenson's readers no doubt found it a touching delineation of their own temptations and struggles. And since the conflict between good and evil is an inevitable aspect of human life, the book has, and will continue to have, an abiding interest for readers.

### ***Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* as a "Shocker"**

*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* has sometimes been called a shocker or thriller, and it does, in fact, have all the qualities of one. A child is trampled down by a strange and evil man. This man is in some way involved with a respectable doctor and scientist. A horrific murder takes place, and the man murdered is a prominent citizen. Something dreadful is happening to the doctor, but no one can say what it is. A friend of the doctor discovers a terrible secret and dies of shock soon thereafter. And so on. Stevenson maintains the air of suspense and the atmosphere of horror throughout the novel. Utterson's search for Hyde, Utterson's and Newcomen's visit to Hyde's house, Jekyll's transformation at the window, Poole's urgent visit to Utterson — all these scenes are full of drama and suspense. Indeed, suspense and horror are the order of the day in the novel. In this way, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* emerges as a fine shocker or thriller. It is more than that, of course, but there is no doubt that a considerable part of its popularity lies in its ability to be read for the sheer fun of the mystery.

### **Stevenson's Criticism of Science and Scientists**

Dr. Jekyll in Stevenson's novel explores new scientific territory and pushes forward the frontiers of knowledge. As a medical man, his natural target for experiment is the human body and mind. Since he wishes to study the mind in its most private workings, he has to use his own mind. Jekyll is prepared to risk his own life in carrying out his scientific experiment. However, he tampers with something which he does not fully understand, and, in the long run, he pays a heavy price for it.

Jekyll's true crime, however, is to abuse his scientific knowledge in order to enjoy illicit adventures in the darkness of the night. Stevenson's criticism is thus not directed against science, but, rather, it is directed against those scientists who do not know how to control the forces they unleash. Those who pursue science, suggest Stevenson, have an onerous responsibility.

### **SYMBOLISM / IMAGERY / MOTIFS / SYMBOLS**

From the its very beginning, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* abounds in powerful images and symbols. Utterson is introduced to the reader as one who is "[inclined] to Cain's heresy." In the *Bible*, Cain kills his brother, Abel. When asked by God where Abel is, he angrily replies, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Stevenson uses this story to suggest that Utterson has nothing to do with other people's private affairs. After Utterson learns of Hyde's trampling of the girl, he has a nightmarish dream, in which he sees Hyde as a "juggernaut" gliding stealthily through the streets, crushing a child at every street corner. "Juggernaut" comes from "Jagannath," one of the Hindi titles for the god Vishnu. A juggernaut is an unstoppable force, and Utterson's fear that Hyde is a juggernaut hints at the universal evil force he represents. Stevenson also employs powerful imagery to describe the fog-shrouded streets of London, soon after the murder of Sir Danvers Carew. They are "like a district of some city in a nightmare." Touches like these throughout the novel add to its depth, richness, and complexity.

### **AUTHOR'S STYLE**

Stevenson was frank in admitting that he imitated the authors he admired. Among the authors he admired and followed were Montaigne, Hazlitt, Defoe, Hawthorne, and Wordsworth. He read them critically and intensely and even jotted down words and phrases which he liked, for use in his own writing. However, in imitating others, he developed his own individual style, which is characterized by precision and a musical quality.

Stevenson's style shows the kind of man he was. His writing is full of echoes from great writers and books. Like many writers of his day, the *Bible* was a major source of allusion and inspiration. For example, he refers to Cain's "heresy" in the first chapter of this book. In the last chapter, he makes a pointed reference to the "Babylonian finger on the wall" spelling out Jekyll's judgment.

Stevenson was a widely traveled person, and he came in contact with people following many professions. He had a special liking for unusual or archaic words and slang. The appropriate use of words like "saw-bones," "apocryphal," "holograph," "troglydytic," "diaphanous," and "scud" bears ample testimony to this characteristic of his style. Indeed, Stevenson's style is marked throughout by the graceful use and easy flow of his language. As a stylist, Stevenson is also fond of balance and antithesis. "It is one thing to mortify curiosity; another thing to conquer it." "Hitherto it had touched him on the intellectual side alone; but now his imagination also was engaged or rather enslaved." "He thought of this kindly, but his thoughts were disquieted and fearful."

It has been remarked that imitation kills originality. This is not true in Stevenson's case. His style certainly gains by imitating great authors.

### **STUDY QUESTIONS**

1. Discuss Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* as a study in the dual nature of the human personality.
2. How does Stevenson handle the theme of evil in his novel?
3. What features of a "shocker" do you find in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*?
4. Comment on Stevenson's novel as a criticism of science and scientists.
5. Examine the moral problem of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.
6. Comment on Stevenson's use of symbols and images in the novel.
7. Write a note on the prose style of Stevenson.
8. Attempt character sketches of the following: Dr. Jekyll, Mr. Hyde, Mr. Utterson, Dr. Lanyon, Mr. Enfield, Poole, and Guest.

### **COMMENT ON THE STUDY OF LITERATURE**

The study of literature is not like the study of math or science, or even history. While those disciplines are based largely upon fact, the study of literature is based upon interpretation and analysis. There are no clear-cut answers in literature, outside of the factual information about an author's life and the basic information about setting and characterization in a piece of literature. The rest is a highly subjective reading of what an author has written; each person brings a different set of values and a different background to the reading. As a result, no two people see the piece of literature in exactly the same light, and few critics agree on everything about a book or an author. In this set of PinkMonkey® Literature Notes for a well-known piece of literature, we at PinkMonkey.com have tried to give an objective literary analysis based upon the information actually found in the novel, book, or play. In the end, however, it is an individual interpretation, but one that we feel can be readily supported by the information that is presented in the guide. In your course of literature study, you or your professor/teacher may come up with a different interpretation of the mood or the theme or the conflict. Your interpretation, if it can be logically supported with information contained within the piece of literature, is just as correct as ours. So is the interpretation of your teacher or professor.

Literature is simply not a black or white situation; instead, there are many gray areas that are open to varying analyses. Your task is to come up with your own analysis that you can logically defend. Hopefully, these PinkMonkey® Literature Notes will help you to accomplish that goal.