



# Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

Study Guide by Course Hero



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## 👁 Book Basics

### AUTHOR

Robert Louis Stevenson

### YEAR PUBLISHED

1886

### GENRE

Horror

### PERSPECTIVE AND NARRATOR

Told in the third person, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* has three narrators: an anonymous narrator who tells most of the story, Dr. Lanyon, and Dr. Jekyll, who narrate one chapter each through confessional letters.

### TENSE

*The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is told in the past tense.

### ABOUT THE TITLE

*The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is a story about the relationship between two men who, judging by their appearances, should have nothing in common, yet the dichotomy between good and evil ties them together. Their relationship is a mystery for the other characters, hence the term case, a shortened form of the term *case study* that refers to a record of research that explores the development of a person.

## 📍 In Context

### The Gothic Novel

While people have always told scary stories, contemporary horror is rooted in the Gothic novel. The Gothic movement might be considered the dark or shadow side of the romantic movement. Both evoke strong emotions and embrace folk beliefs, legends, and myths rather than the new inventions of science. However, where the romantic writers, such as Wordsworth and Blake, focused on natural beauty, Gothic writers kept their attention on death and the irrational. Harold Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) is considered the first Gothic novel, but many others followed, such as Charles Maturin's 1820 *Melmoth the Wanderer*. Gothic works focus on the dark and mysterious. This darkness can be literal, with action set at night or in passageways, or symbolic darkness in the form of sin and crime. Unnatural passions are common in the Gothic. Writers of such literature often build mystery and suspense as Stevenson does in this novella, which uses the structure of nested manuscripts, or narratives within narratives. This means there is no single objective unifying

perspective. Instead documents written at different times provide different glimpses of the mysterious activity at the heart of the story, and readers must weave the information together.

## Victorian Morality

Victorian morality was a mass of contradictions, which in many ways perfectly suits Stevenson's masterpiece. On the one hand the period was characterized by a strict code of sexual morality, even repression (especially for women). Both secular and religious leaders sought to uplift the poor and sinful and thought they had a responsibility to do so. Also during this period British society took more active steps to address crime and poverty; the idea of a professional police force took hold during this time. On the other hand Victorian England accepted the poor living in terrible conditions. Prostitutes were common in London. Men were supposed to have sexual desires, but women were not. The result was a continual and often scandalous interplay between the classes that was both sexual and economic.

## Evolution

Fifteen years before Stevenson wrote *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Charles Darwin published *The Descent of Man*. Darwin explicitly stated that his goal was to determine whether humans, like other species, descended from other forms. He concluded that they did, arguing that humans descended from hairy quadrupeds with tails. Darwin's impact on 19th-century society was immense. The idea that evolution shaped humans and animals alike challenged the special status humans received in the biblical story of creation, where they are created distinct from and superior to the animals. In popular fiction this erosion of human uniqueness took the form of animal-human hybrids, as in *The Island of Dr. Moreau* by H.G. Wells, or the emergence of animalistic traits in humans. Readers see this in Mr. Hyde's "ape-like" and "troglodytic" nature.

## Homosexuality

There is no explicit homosexuality in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*—nor is there explicit discussion of it. However, in his

introduction to the Penguin Classics edition of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Robert Mighall argues that understanding British attitudes about homosexuality in the late 1800s is essential for understanding the novella. He specifically argues that the relationship between Jekyll and Hyde looks like a homosexual affair to Utterson and would look that way to Stevenson's readers. Mighall bases this interpretation on lines like the following from Utterson: "It turns me cold to think of this creature stealing like a thief to Harry's bedside." The suggestion that Hyde may be blackmailing Jekyll would also signal possible homosexuality: threatening to expose a man as gay was the basis of many blackmail cases in the 19th century. This assumption works thematically, since Hyde is Jekyll's way of indulging passions he cannot pursue in public. The suggestion of homosexuality also explains other activity in the novella, such as the way Sir Danvers Carew, a "beautiful gentleman," accosts another man (Hyde, as it turns out) the night before he is beaten to death. It also works with the plot, since it provides a plausible explanation for why Jekyll might do things such as leave everything to Hyde.

## Stevenson's Scottish Background

Robert Louis Stevenson was raised in Edinburgh, Scotland. That background shaped this work in two ways. First, Edinburgh is composed of two sections: Old Town and New Town. New Town is more logically organized and more modern. Old Town is much older. It grew organically, and its streets are narrower, rougher, and darker. Some doorways are hidden. Critics such as G.K. Chesterton have argued that *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is actually set in Edinburgh rather than in London as Stevenson says, based on the descriptions of the city in the novella.

The second, more specific way Edinburgh's history shaped Stevenson is in the figure of William Brodie. Brodie lived in Edinburgh's Old Town in the 18th century. By day Brodie was a professional cabinetmaker, a deacon in a guild, and a member of the city council. However, part of his job as a cabinetmaker was repairing locks. By night he used that skill to rob the homes of the rich and respectable. The man was eventually arrested and put to death for his crimes. Interestingly, Stevenson's parents owned a cabinet built by Brodie, and it was in Robert's nursery. Stevenson's nurse, Alison

Cunningham, told Robert the story of William Brodie when Robert was young. Stevenson even wrote a play about Brodie titled *Deacon Brodie, or the Double Life*.

## Author Biography

Born in Edinburgh, Scotland, on November 13, 1850, Robert Louis Stevenson lived a brief but interesting life. During his childhood his health was so poor it prevented him from receiving much formal education and delayed his learning to read and write. Nevertheless Stevenson was fortunate in having a nurse, Alison Cunningham, who read him religious stories and told him ghost stories and dark tales of real life, like the story of the famous Scottish criminal Deacon Brodie. His imagination thus piqued, Stevenson decided from an early age to become a writer. He dictated his first story at age six.

Stevenson's family shaped him in several ways. A strong mechanical interest ran through his father's side of the family: his father, grandfather, and step-great-grandfather were all lighthouse engineers. Naturally Stevenson's father assumed Robert would follow in their footsteps. Stevenson, however, wanted to write and studied law as a compromise before becoming a professional writer. His mother's father was a minister, and both parents were deeply religious. They gave Stevenson an intensely religious upbringing, which Stevenson rebelled against in college, but it definitely colored his work.

Stevenson traveled widely throughout his life, partly for adventure and partly while looking for places that would be better for his health. He visited the United States, traveled through Europe, and sailed the South Pacific. Sometimes he wrote about these travels in nonfiction travel writing. At other times he used them as material for his adventure stories, such as *Treasure Island* and "The Beach of Falesá."

Stevenson's breakthrough as a writer came with the publication of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. The story came to Stevenson in a dream in 1885, and he wrote the entire novella in just a few days. It sold 40,000 copies in the first six months and has since become a classic.

Stevenson died on December 3, 1894, in Samoa.

## Characters

### Dr. Jekyll

Dr. Henry Jekyll is a complicated character, though readers don't get a full picture of him until he explains his deeds and choices in the final chapter. Like all humans Henry Jekyll is, as he puts it, a "composite." His nature is both good and evil, civilized and primitive. Intrigued by this dual nature and wanting to experience the two separately, Jekyll finds a way to indulge his darker passions without it becoming known. Jekyll applies his knowledge of chemistry and invents a "tincture" that separates his good from his evil identity and even creates an entirely different body for each self. (Edward Hyde is his evil persona.) Above all Jekyll is almost classically arrogant. He believes he can reconstruct his own identity in order to break humanity's shared ethical rules and England's social norms, and without paying a price. Obviously he is wrong, and this novella is an account of his errors and how he pays for them.

### Mr. Hyde

Edward Hyde is the evil side of Dr. Jekyll's identity. He came into being when Jekyll invented a drug that would split his good and bad natures into two entities. Hyde even possesses a different body than does Jekyll. Hyde is younger than Jekyll but also hairier, as if he is more primitive. He is full of energy and is more evil than Jekyll's dark side had been. Everyone who sees Hyde finds him disturbing, but no one can name a single specific detail that makes him repellent. There's something about him that seems less evolved, like a caveman, but also something that seems purely evil. Hyde and Jekyll share a single memory. At first Jekyll must use the "tincture" he has created to transform himself into Jekyll, but after a while Jekyll finds himself transforming into Hyde spontaneously, first while he's sleeping and then while he's awake.

### Utterson

The interplay between Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde is the engine driving this story. However, by the end, both of the two interwoven characters are dead. Mr. Utterson is the closest

thing in the novella to a unifying consciousness or point-of-view character. Utterson is a lawyer and brings a lawyer's seriousness and logic to his interactions with other characters. Utterson is always aware of his responsibilities. At times, as when he's talking with Poole, he even warns people about this responsibility. However, Utterson's seriousness goes beyond his professional capacities. He is an austere man who actively practices discipline and resists temptations, even in his private life. This is most visible in the novella's opening paragraph. Utterson actively denies himself the things he enjoys, like drinking wine and going to the theater, precisely because he enjoys them. In this way he, more than Jekyll, is an anti-Hyde. Whereas Jekyll created Hyde to give his passions free rein, Utterson always holds a tight grip on his own actions and feelings.

## Enfield

Richard Enfield is one of several examples of Victorian respectability in this story. He is related to Utterson ("a distant kinsman"), and, though he is not nearly as austere as Utterson, he values their time together considerably. This kinship is literal, but it is also symbolic: these men align with virtue and civic duty, unlike Hyde. The two men take walks together every Sunday. It's on one of these that Enfield tells Utterson the "story of the door," which starts the narrative of Hyde (and Utterson's interest in him) in motion. Enfield's curiosity draws Utterson's attention to that mysterious door—and the reader is drawn in as well. Enfield is also Utterson's companion for the "incident at the window," when Jekyll must disappear because he's losing control to Hyde. Enfield functions as a witness to extraordinary events.

## Lanyon

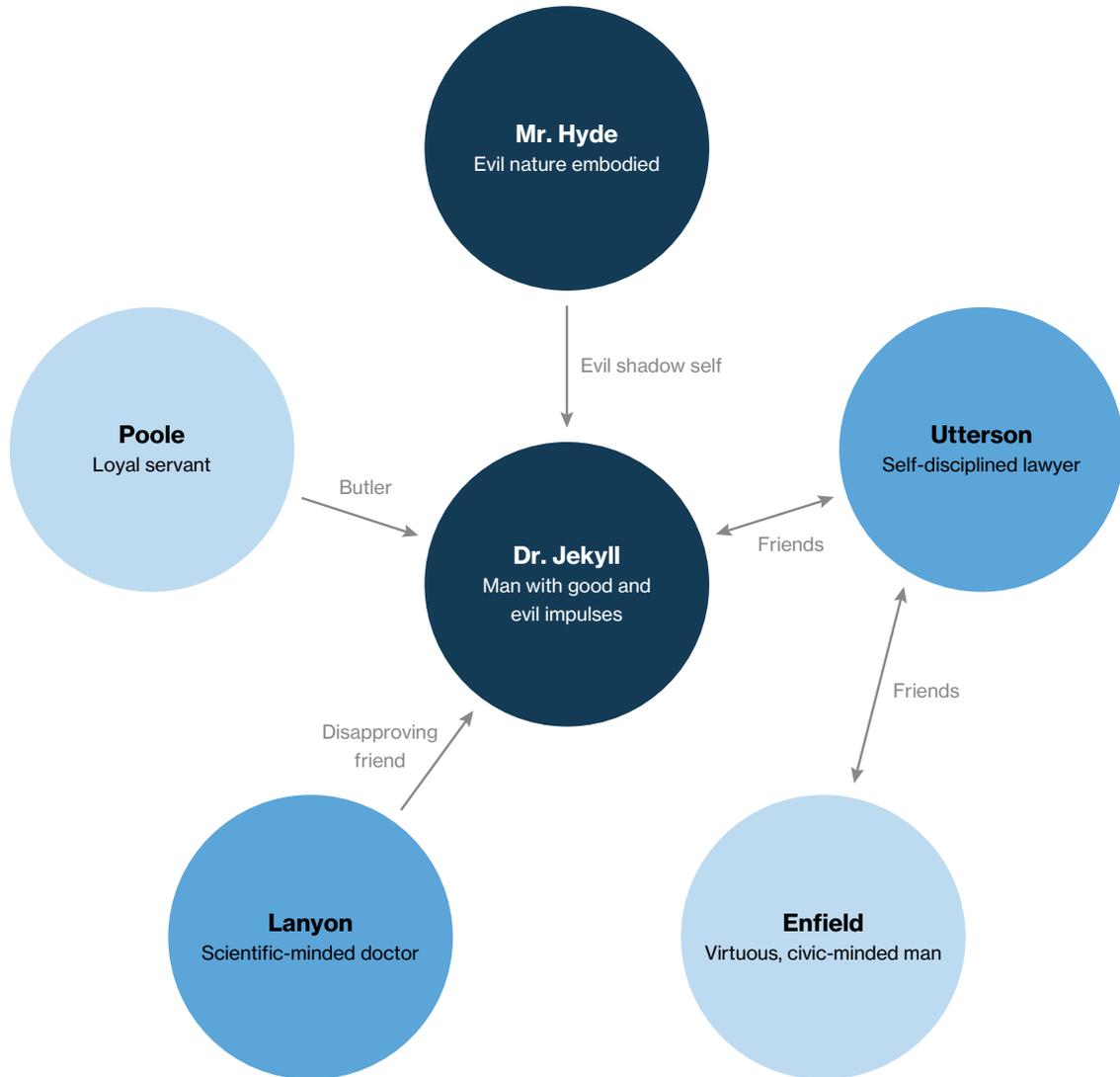
Dr. Lanyon is introduced in the second chapter when Utterson is searching for Mr. Hyde. He's important for several reasons. First, as Utterson notes, Lanyon is another of Jekyll's old friends. Their relationship deteriorates throughout the novella, which helps build dramatic tension. Second, Utterson is a lawyer, and his rejection of Hyde might be colored by that professional perspective. However, Lanyon is a doctor and so is qualified to evaluate Jekyll's project from a scientific perspective. Tellingly, he calls Jekyll's research "unscientific balderdash." Third, the story's sixth chapter focuses on Lanyon

and the change in his health and relationship to Jekyll, though the meaning of that chapter is not revealed until the novella's ninth chapter, "Dr. Lanyon's Narrative." That later chapter reveals what Lanyon went through earlier: he saw Hyde change into Jekyll. This unnatural transformation shook Lanyon's mind and broke his health.

## Poole

Poole is Jekyll's main servant and has been with the doctor for decades. In some sense, if Jekyll serves as Hyde's public face, Poole serves as Jekyll's public face. When Utterson first visits Jekyll in "Search for Mr. Hyde," he has to ask Poole if Jekyll is home. And Poole makes excuses for him. Once Utterson's relationship with Jekyll deteriorates sufficiently, he actually says he'd rather deal with Poole on Jekyll's doorstep than enter his friend's house. Poole's long service gives his testimony extra weight. His intimate knowledge of Henry Jekyll lets him speak with certainty in "The Last Night" and confirm for Utterson that it isn't Jekyll locked in the lab, but Hyde.

# Character Map



- Main character
- Other Major Character
- Minor Character

## Full Character List

Character	Description
Dr. Jekyll	Dr. Henry Jekyll is a respected medical professional who experiments with the dual nature of human beings.
Mr. Hyde	Mr. Edward Hyde is Jekyll's evil and disturbing alter ego.
Utterson	Gabriel John Utterson is a lawyer and Dr. Jekyll's old friend.
Enfield	Richard Enfield is friends with Utterson and Jekyll.
Lanyon	Dr. Hastie Lanyon is a physician and one of Jekyll's old friends.
Poole	Poole is Dr. Jekyll's longtime butler.
Doctor from Edinburgh	The doctor from Edinburgh aids the little girl who is trampled by Hyde.
Hyde's housekeeper	Hyde's housekeeper is an unscrupulous woman who cares for his house in Soho.
Jekyll's maid	Jekyll's maid weeps for him when it is feared he may be dead.
Little girl	The little girl is the victim of Mr. Hyde, who tramples over her as Enfield watches.
Maid servant	The maid servant observes the killing of Sir Danvers Carew.
Mr. Guest	Mr. Guest is Utterson's clerk.
Police officer	The police officer investigates the murder of Sir Danvers Carew.
Sir Danvers Carew	Sir Danvers Carew is a respected gentleman who is killed by Hyde.

## Plot Summary

*The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, set in 19th-century London, is a highly suspenseful novella that blends science fiction, horror, and detective genres as it tells the peculiar story of Henry Jekyll and Edward Hyde.

Two men, Utterson and Enfield, are out for a walk. Enfield sees a door that reminds him of a story. He explains that one night when the streets were almost empty, a man ran into a little girl, knocked her down, trampled over her, and left. Enfield grabbed the man and, with a few others, blackmailed him for money for the girl's family. The man took them to a door, went through, and returned with some gold and a check for the rest. That man was Edward Hyde.

A lawyer, Utterson has held a will for Jekyll for some time, and the terms of the will have always concerned him: Jekyll's will leaves everything to Hyde if Jekyll dies or disappears. After what he has learned about Hyde, Utterson is more concerned than ever. As a result, he sets out to find Hyde, haunting the streets of London until he locates him. When he does, he thinks Hyde's face is very disturbing. Two weeks later when he dines with Jekyll, Utterson asks about Hyde. Jekyll doesn't tell him anything and even makes Utterson promise to care for Hyde if Jekyll disappears.

One night a year later, Hyde beats a respected gentleman to death. After the police find a letter on the body addressed to Utterson, they contact Utterson, who identifies the body. He then takes the officers to Hyde's residence, which shows signs of a hasty escape.

Utterson visits Jekyll and asks if he has heard about the murder or if he is hiding the man. Jekyll swears he is not. He lets Utterson read a letter from Hyde that seems to indicate their relationship is over. Utterson is relieved but only for a few minutes. His head clerk says the handwriting in the letter appears to be Jekyll's. Utterson concludes that Jekyll is covering for a murderer.

Two months pass in which Jekyll seems to have returned to normal, and then suddenly he shuts Utterson out. Utterson visits their mutual friend, Dr. Lanyon, only to find the doctor very unhealthy, as if from a great shock. Lanyon and Jekyll are no longer talking, but Lanyon won't tell Utterson why. Utterson writes Jekyll, asking for an explanation, but all Jekyll says is that he agrees the friendship is over. A few weeks later Lanyon

dies. At that point Utterson opens an envelope Lanyon had left to be opened upon his death; it contains another letter to be opened upon Jekyll's death or disappearance.

Some time later Utterson and Enfield go for a walk and again pass the door to Jekyll's laboratory. They start talking to Jekyll, who is sitting in a window, but then Jekyll's face suddenly takes on the expression of great terror. The window slams shut and he disappears. Utterson and Enfield walk on, confused and worried.

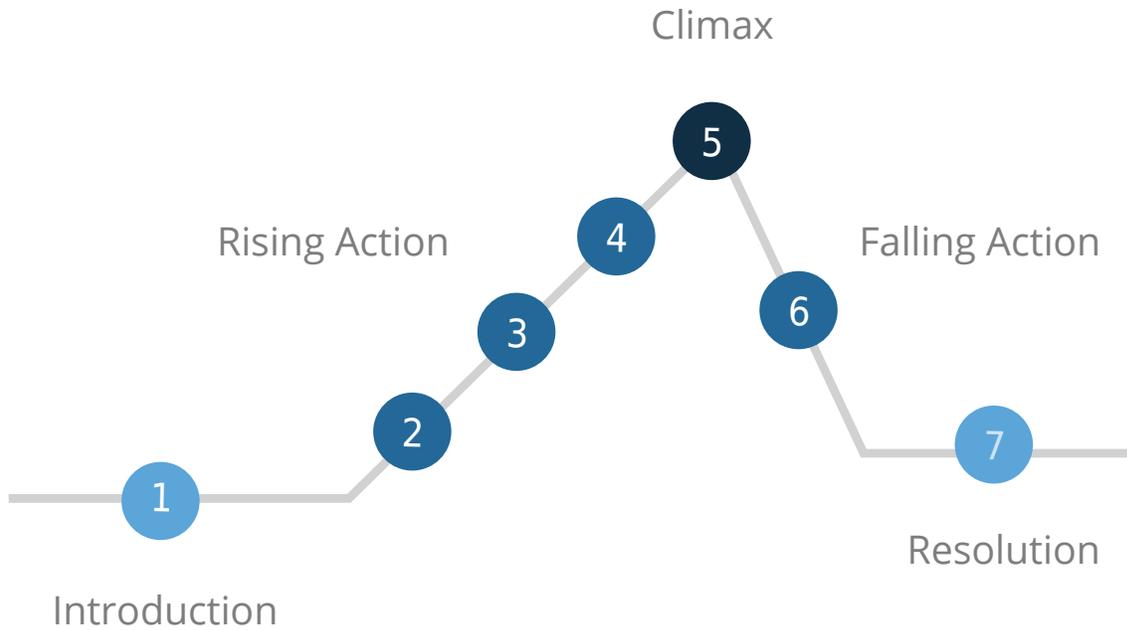
One evening some time later, Jekyll's servant Poole visits Utterson at his home. Poole worries that something has happened to his master and asks Utterson to come with him. When they arrive at Jekyll's house, Poole knocks on his cabinet door. Utterson agrees with Poole that it is Hyde's voice, not Jekyll's, that they hear. They break down the door and find Hyde dead but still convulsing from the poison he has taken. There's no sign of Jekyll. The only thing they find is an envelope addressed to Utterson that contains three enclosures. The first is Jekyll's revised will, which leaves everything to Utterson. The second is a note to read Lanyon's letter that Utterson has at home. The third is Jekyll's "confession."

Utterson returns home and reads Lanyon's letter, in which the doctor describes a service he performed for Jekyll. Lanyon went to Jekyll's cabinet above his lab, took out a drawer, and returned home, where he waited for a messenger who would pick it up. When the messenger arrived, Lanyon watched as the messenger, whom he identifies as Hyde, mixed a potion from ingredients in the drawer and drank it. Hyde transformed before Lanyon's eyes into Dr. Jekyll.

Utterson then reads Jekyll's explanation of everything that has happened. It explains how Jekyll had lived a double life, acting one way in private and another in public. His scientific studies led him to realize all people had these two identities, and he found a way to split them in two, creating a second face and body. He made a drug that let him change from Henry Jekyll to Edward Hyde. Hyde was younger, more passionate, and much more wicked. Jekyll enjoyed having this outlet for his passions, and he indulged his experience of Hyde until he killed Carew. Then he tried to put Hyde aside. However, he soon learned that he'd upset the balance of his identity so that Hyde was now his natural shape. Jekyll found himself changing into Hyde without his potion. He started to make plans in case Hyde took permanent control; he also tried to create more of his potion to

gain more control. However, the new potion was not effective. He took the last of the original potion to gain enough control to write this record of his deeds. One of the entities then takes arsenic to kill them both; Hyde is the one found dying.

## Plot Diagram



### Introduction

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1. Mr. Hyde tramples a little girl.

### Rising Action

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2. Mr. Hyde kills Utterson's client, Sir Danvers Carew.
3. Utterson realizes Dr. Jekyll forged a letter for Mr. Hyde.
4. Lanyon watches Mr. Hyde transform into Dr. Jekyll.

### Climax

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5. Utterson and Poole break down the door to Dr. Jekyll's lab.

### Falling Action

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6. Dr. Jekyll kills himself.

### Resolution

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7. Dr. Jekyll's research explains his transformation.

## Timeline of Events

### Some time later

Utterson meets Mr. Hyde at Dr. Jekyll's dissecting room door, finds him repulsive.

### The next day

Utterson realizes Dr. Jekyll forged a letter for Mr. Hyde.

### Some time later

Dr. Jekyll loses control over Mr. Hyde, transforming randomly.

### Moments later

Dr. Jekyll kills himself.

### 1880s

Mr. Hyde tramples a little girl.

### A year later

Mr. Hyde beats Sir Danvers Carew to death.

### Two months later

Lanyon dies after passing a letter to Utterson describing Mr. Hyde's transformation into Dr. Jekyll.

### Some time later

Utterson and Poole break down the door to Dr. Jekyll's lab.

### A short time later

Dr. Jekyll's written account explains his research and transformation.

# Chapter Summaries

## Chapter 1

### Summary

While taking a walk one Sunday, Mr. Utterson and his friend, Mr. Enfield, pass through a quiet London neighborhood. Enfield points out a door and tells Utterson a story involving that door. One evening, Enfield says, he was walking home at 3 a.m. and saw two people in the otherwise deserted neighborhood. One was a small man walking quickly, and the other was a young girl running down a cross street. They ran into each other at the corner, and the man trampled the little girl and left her lying there screaming. Enfield, the girl's family, and a doctor confronted the man and blackmailed him into paying 100 pounds to the girl and her family as compensation for what he'd done.

The man led them to a doorway, entered, and returned with 10 pounds in gold and a check for the other 90. The group doubted the check was good, but the man stayed with them until the bank opened the next morning. To everyone's surprise, the check was good. Utterson asks some follow-up questions, but Enfield hadn't investigated further. Enfield has, however, studied the door and says it is strange. It isn't clear where it leads or how many rooms are associated with it. There's some confusion about where one building stops and the next one starts. Utterson asks the name of the man who trampled the child. It was Hyde. Utterson doesn't ask whose name was on the check because, he says, he already knows it.

### Analysis

The first two paragraphs describe Mr. Utterson's character. Even though they are interesting in themselves, the paragraphs are also important because of how they frame what will follow. Utterson's character is "eminently human," which serves as a contrast to Hyde's, which is not—at least not fully. His austerity and self-control introduce the theme of self-control and, again, provide a framing contrast against which Hyde's wild abandon appears all the more vividly. At the same time, the way Utterson is willing to follow "Cain's heresy" and let his fellow

man "go to the devil in his own way" foreshadows a flaw in his approach to life. His austerity may discipline Utterson, but his self-restraint leaves society open to others like Hyde.

Mr. Hyde is a character so vile and so completely ruled by his passions that he tramples a little girl and leaves her screaming in pain and fright, and he does so without a thought or a care. This is a man, as readers will learn later, who is willfully and happily evil. But this instance is different. He doesn't willfully run into the little girl or try to hurt her, but he is completely oblivious to her and to any pain he may have caused.

Readers learn they must make sense of Mr. Hyde's actions and character in the same way his fellow characters do, by hearing fragments of information about him. Second, Mr. Hyde's actions do not occur in a vacuum. He affects others directly (the little girl) and indirectly (the crowd who captures him and the men who talk about him). Third, this is a society in which others' actions matter. This isn't a matter of idle interest, like a news story. The people who see Hyde act are moved to action in turn. Fourth, this chapter introduces both the literal mystery of where that door goes and the symbolism of doors and buildings that will recur throughout the novella. Fifth, while Hyde cares nothing for good and evil, he cares about social disapproval. He is easily blackmailed for his actions and is willing to pay a substantial amount not to have his name smeared in public. This decision introduces the issue of class. Stevenson shows that in some very important ways, society's expectations about class and how gentlemen act are more important than morality or questions of good or evil. Finally, though Dr. Jekyll has not yet appeared, the first tie between Hyde and Jekyll is introduced, a connection readers will soon make.

This chapter also uses techniques common in Gothic and horror fiction to build suspense, as well as foreshadow events and people that will later be shown as important. One of these is rationing out key details slowly, as when Enfield doesn't share Hyde's name until late in the chapter. Another is to use descriptions that seem to be casual metaphors, like referring to Hyde's "black, sneering coolness" as being "like Satan." In the moment it is meant as a metaphor. Later in the narrative, Utterson will claim that he literally sees Satan's mark on Hyde. A third technique is filtering the story through multiple characters. This fragments the narrative and makes readers sift and evaluate the accounts they are given as the characters do. This technique also lets Stevenson use character reactions to guide readers. In this chapter Utterson stands in for readers,

asking the questions they can't. In the following chapter, readers should want to become, like Utterson, "Mr. Seek" in pursuit of Mr. Hyde.

## Chapter 2

### Summary

Once he is home Mr. Utterson reviews Jekyll's will. It leaves everything to Edward Hyde and says that if Jekyll disappears for three months or more, Hyde gets all Jekyll's possessions. Utterson worries the will might indicate madness or a personal disgrace on Jekyll's part. He visits Dr. Lanyon, a friend to both Utterson and Jekyll. He finds that Lanyon and Jekyll have fallen out of contact because of a clash over one of Jekyll's theories that Lanyon finds "unscientific balderdash." Utterson is relieved: he can dismiss it as a scientific disagreement rather than a more serious ethical or medical concern. After the two men part, Utterson dreams of Hyde trampling the child and wishes he could see Hyde's face. He commits himself to finding Mr. Hyde so he can see him for himself.

Whenever he finds time, Utterson plants himself near the door where Hyde went to retrieve money to pay the blackmail. When he finally sees Hyde approaching the door, Utterson taps him on the shoulder. Hyde is momentarily frightened but talks to him. During this conversation, Utterson learns some facts about Hyde, like his address in Soho. This conversation also signals to readers that Hyde is closer to Jekyll than his old friend Utterson is. He knows what Jekyll would and wouldn't have said, and he calls Utterson on a lie.

Once Utterson sees Hyde's face, he speculates on what makes it so distasteful. He concludes that it bears "Satan's signature" and is marked by "something troglodytic." Utterson then goes to visit his friend Henry Jekyll who lives close by, but Jekyll's servant, Poole, tells him Jekyll isn't home. Utterson tells Poole he saw Hyde enter through the "dissecting room door" and asks if it is okay. Poole tells Utterson it is common: Hyde has a key. This troubles Utterson and makes him more certain than ever that something is wrong in Jekyll's life, and he wonders whether "the ghost of some old sin" has returned to haunt Jekyll. For that to happen, Jekyll would have to have committed some serious sin in the past. This foreshadows the final chapter when Jekyll admits his history of immoral acts.

### Analysis

Prior to learning of Mr. Hyde's violence, Utterson has been concerned about Dr. Jekyll's will because it is odd. He can think of no good reason for Jekyll to give everything he owns to Hyde. But now after hearing the story of the girl Hyde trampled on the street, Utterson's concern has grown. In a way this event foreshadows Jekyll's eventual exposure as Mr. Hyde, because already people are making connections between the two men. From this point on, it is extreme arrogance for Jekyll to continue transitioning between the two identities, and yet he does.

While he searches for Hyde, Utterson moves through London. However, the London through which he walks is not a literal London. There was no "Gaunt Street" at the time, and the paths Utterson walks don't match actual London geography. Instead, as Mighall has indicated, this should be treated as an allegorical and symbolic city. Read this way, the street where Utterson lives symbolizes his "gaunt" character. Similarly, it is appropriate that Jekyll inhabits a section of the city where "ancient, handsome houses" exist in a state of decay, divided into units for "all sorts and conditions of men," including "shady lawyers, and the agents of obscure enterprises." Jekyll is by this point a divided, shady, and obscure fellow. Some readers, including G. K. Chesterton, have claimed that this London should be read as Stevenson's home town of Edinburgh, which is sharply divided into two sections, the old and the new.

Whether or not readers take the interpretation in this specific direction, they should note the uncanny, Gothic qualities the city holds for Mr. Utterson after he hears Enfield's account of Mr. Hyde. As night comes on, Utterson shifts from thinking about Hyde intellectually to exploring the story he heard imaginatively and through images. Enfield's words shift into a series of "lighted pictures," and the London in that vision haunts Utterson. The city he knows so well and navigates easily by day becomes a confusing labyrinth. He watches Hyde, "that human Juggernaut," repeatedly trample the child, then sees some strangely powerful figure haunting sleepers' dreams and making them do its bidding. Though Utterson does not know it, this image foreshadows Hyde's control over Jekyll and signals that, on some level, he already knows the relationship between the two men. Perhaps most terrifying, though, is the way Utterson's dream generalizes this threat: what started as one man crushing a child now happens on "every street-corner." And actually, if the theories Jekyll

expresses in the final chapter are correct and all people have these divided, multiple selves within them, that is the implication of his potion: there could be a "human Juggernaut" everywhere.

This chapter further develops the symbolism of the door. Readers should notice that it isn't just a door but the "dissecting room door." Hyde enters through the room where human bodies are cut apart. Looking back on this chapter, readers will recognize that the door also leads to the room where Dr. Jekyll dissects his own personality.

The section in which Utterson stands still and tries to identify what specifically is disturbing about Hyde's appearance is telling. He can identify some contributing elements: he sees Hyde as both visibly marked by sin and like a caveman. Hyde is both evil and evolutionarily inferior. But as Utterson indicates, there is more. There's a mismatch between the soul and the flesh that make up Hyde. This description is also a fine example of what Freud called "the uncanny," a quality common to Gothic literature. When a text evokes the uncanny, readers encounter something that blurs distinctions between the real and the unreal. This is finally what makes Hyde so disturbing and why Utterson's dreams do a better job of pinning down Hyde's nature than his conscious mind can.

Readers also learn that Hyde's actions and nature disrupt several different arenas of life. Not only does he have some odd hold over Jekyll, but Hyde violates law, ethics, and social norms. Hyde's violations even extend to the biological realm, as witnessed by Utterson's observation of "something troglodytic" in his face. Hyde is essentially a different species. If that weren't enough, Lanyon's objection to Jekyll is over a scientific topic, one that can be construed to involve Jekyll's experimentation with separating an individual's personality. Together, these disruptions suggest and foreshadow the magnitude of Jekyll's misdeeds.

Utterson finds Hyde so upsetting that he sets out to find him. In a way Utterson is another doubled identity: he plays "seek" to Hyde's "hide." Whatever Hyde is trying to conceal, Utterson is trying to reveal.

## Chapter 3

## Summary

Two weeks later Jekyll has a dinner. When the other guests leave, Utterson remains in order to talk to Jekyll about his will. Jekyll doesn't want to talk about it, but he does say Lanyon is as upset by his will as Utterson is. When Utterson explains that he has learned things about Hyde, Jekyll asks him to drop the subject. "I am painfully situated," Jekyll explains. And when Utterson pressures Jekyll to tell him the whole story, Jekyll responds that he'd tell Utterson if he could tell anyone, but he can't—and as soon as he can get rid of Hyde, he will. Utterson agrees to drop the subject, and Jekyll asks one more thing of Utterson. If he disappears, he wants Utterson to take care of Hyde and make sure he gets "his rights." Utterson doesn't like the request, or Hyde, but he agrees.

## Analysis

This brief chapter mostly shows Utterson trying to learn more about Hyde and failing. It does introduce a few new elements to the narrative, however. The first of these is that the good characters—Lanyon and Utterson, mainly—aren't independently concerned about Jekyll's will; they form a kind of team and agree in their disapproval. The next is how it shows Jekyll's lack of independence. Jekyll would tell Utterson the whole story if he could, but he can't. Though the reader doesn't know it yet, this foreshadows a profound dramatic irony and shows that Jekyll has already lost control of the situation he created. In the novella's final chapter, Jekyll will claim that he created this situation in order to generate greater independence and freedom. A third insight readers may discern is how Hyde continues to distort everything around him. In the previous chapter, Utterson said he saw something satanic in Hyde's face. Now he agrees to protect Hyde's rights, thus aligning himself with the forces of evil.

## Chapter 4

## Summary

A year passes without incident, but then a savage murder occurs. A young maid servant is looking out the window at the moon when she sees a white-haired gentleman and Mr. Hyde

meet on the street outside. She recognizes Hyde because he had once visited her employer. The two men talk, and then Hyde suddenly beats the older man to death with his cane. The maid calls for help, but Hyde is long gone when the police arrive. It wasn't a robbery, they note, because they find money and a gold watch on the victim as well as an envelope with Mr. Utterson's name on it. When the police take the envelope to Utterson, he accompanies them to view the body and identifies it as Sir Danvers Carew, a respected gentleman. Utterson then guides the police to Hyde's home located in a disreputable part of town.

When they knock on the door, the housekeeper answers and tells them she hasn't seen Hyde for two months until yesterday. Utterson and the inspector search Hyde's house and find that Hyde uses only two rooms, leaving the rest of the house empty. Those two rooms are expensively furnished, however, and are in a chaotic state as if they have been "ransacked." A number of papers are partially burned in the fireplace. They find his checkbook and the broken end of the cane that has been used to kill Carew. They then visit Hyde's bank and find that he still has thousands of pounds there. This encourages the inspector, who thinks he's sure to come get the money.

## Analysis

The murder is the main event in this chapter, but readers should notice how Stevenson introduces it and how he signals possible interpretations for what happens. The description of the maid servant musing at the window is distinctly romantic. She is dreaming of life's possibilities. Hyde's appearance turns that "daydream" into a nightmare. Hyde's interaction with the other man also introduces a disturbing red herring as far as Jekyll's motivation. Though Stevenson never says this, the interaction between Carew and Hyde suggests a homosexual encounter: two men who seem not to know each other striking up a conversation in the night, in a disreputable, lower-class neighborhood. Period readers might have asked themselves if Carew is a homosexual and if that is the nature of Hyde's hold over Jekyll. However, Stevenson quickly shows that the situation is more complicated. If Hyde is simply homosexual, he and Carew could have gone off together. If his hold over Jekyll is blackmail about homosexual activity, one would think he would have taken the money.

This chapter also does a fine job of creating an urban

landscape defined by Gothic elements. When Hyde commits this horrific crime, the neighborhood is full of fog, blurring clear sight. It is lit by moonlight rather than sun, and the maid who is the only witness sees these events while in a "dream of musing." As she watches, the actions slide smoothly from ones that make rational sense—men walking down the street, one greeting the other politely—into a savage scene of irrational violence. All is transformed. The cane Jekyll carries as a marker of his status becomes a murder weapon in Hyde's hands. Carew's murder is driven by passion that leaves reason behind: Hyde doesn't even bother robbing the man. The violence permeates this world: the sound reaches the watching maid and causes her to faint.

This chapter touches on several themes as well as ongoing narrative threads. When Utterson visits Hyde's home, he finds his housekeeper has an "evil face," but good manners. This is another example of the theme of the divided self. It also does a good job of underscoring how upsetting Hyde's face is: even people with recognizably evil faces don't like him.

Hyde hits Carew hard enough with his cane to break it. The cane is symbolic of Hyde's identity as a gentleman. Its breaking is symbolic of change. Now under investigation for murder, Hyde can no longer pass freely in society.

## Chapter 5

### Summary

Utterson visits Jekyll, who receives him in his laboratory, to ask if Jekyll has heard about Carew's murder. When Jekyll acknowledges he has, Utterson tells him he was Carew's lawyer as well as Jekyll's and asks Jekyll if he is hiding Mr. Hyde. Jekyll swears he is not and promises Utterson that he'll never hear from Hyde again. He then gives Utterson a letter, saying he does not know if he should give it to the police, and asks Utterson for his opinion. When Utterson reads it, he's relieved. It seems to indicate that Hyde has repaid Jekyll for his help and left the area. Utterson asks Jekyll if Hyde dictated the particular clauses in Jekyll's will, but the doctor goes pale and does not answer. Jekyll does say, though, that he's learned a powerful lesson.

As Utterson leaves, he asks Poole who had delivered the letter, but Poole insists no letter was received. This makes Utterson

worried. Once back in his office, Utterson asks his chief clerk, Mr. Guest, to read the letter and offer his opinion on what to do with it. Guest notices something odd about the handwriting. When a servant delivers a note from Dr. Jekyll, Guest compares the handwriting to that of Mr. Hyde's letter and says they are the same, except they slant in different directions. Utterson concludes that Jekyll forged the letter for Hyde.

## Analysis

Hyde's sudden and intense violence leading to murder terrifies Jekyll. Though readers aren't told this until the final chapter, Jekyll can promise Utterson he'll never again hear from Hyde because he is now committed to not taking his potion any more.

The setting of the scene is telling, however. The Henry Jekyll who is friends with Utterson and travels in polite society would normally welcome people into his living room or his study. This Jekyll greets Utterson in his lab. This is where he belongs and feels most natural. It is also where Hyde has access to the house. So although he is currently Jekyll, he is greeting Utterson in Hyde's domain.

This chapter builds the novella's suspense, first when Jekyll refuses to answer certain questions from Utterson and then when Utterson learns that the same person wrote both letters. Utterson concludes it is a forgery, which in a way it is, but it also works on a deeper, thematic level. Just as their handwriting is the same but slanted in different directions, so Jekyll and Hyde are the same person, but slanted in different directions. Jekyll is slanted toward the good, or at least the socially accepted blend of good and evil. Hyde is slanted toward evil. It is a useful symbol of the divided self that their handwriting is recognizably similar.

## Chapter 6

### Summary

Two months pass without news of Hyde, and Jekyll settles into a routine, spending time with friends and engaging in religious and charitable activities. Utterson becomes accustomed to seeing Jekyll regularly, but then unexpectedly and without explanation Jekyll shuts Utterson out. At a loss Utterson visits

Dr. Lanyon and finds his old friend very changed. He looks older and unwell. Lanyon says he's had a shock and might not recover. Utterson tells him Jekyll is unwell, too, and asks if Lanyon has seen him. The question upsets Lanyon, who asks his friend not to mention Jekyll: they've had a split, and Lanyon regards Jekyll as dead.

When Utterson gets home, he writes Jekyll, asking why he has barred him from his home and broken with Lanyon. He receives a reply the next day. Jekyll doesn't blame Lanyon for the end of their friendship and agrees it must be over. He further asks Utterson not to be surprised if Jekyll often refuses to see him.

A few weeks later Lanyon dies. Utterson then opens an envelope Lanyon had left to be opened after he was dead. Inside is another envelope, labeled to be opened only if Jekyll dies or disappears. Upon reflection Utterson locks this envelope in his safe. After Lanyon's death he tries repeatedly to visit Jekyll, but Jekyll refuses to see him. Utterson's visits become less frequent over time.

## Analysis

One of the first things readers should note about this chapter is its title: they don't actually get to see the "remarkable incident" described. It is, like so much else in this suspenseful classic, hidden and delayed. Readers must guess at what the incident is based on clues visible in its aftermath. Whatever it is, the shock was traumatic because it ruins Lanyon's health. And, just as Utterson saw evil in Hyde's face when they first met, he sees several key truths in Lanyon's face and body. First, Utterson sees Lanyon's "death-warrant" written on his face. He recognizes that Lanyon is dying. Second, something about Lanyon indicates he has faced "some deep-seated terror of the mind." And third, Utterson can see that this knowledge is more than Lanyon can bear. In combination these details testify to the power of sight and knowledge in this novella.

Readers will later learn what has happened to Lanyon: Lanyon saw Hyde transform into Jekyll.

The nested envelopes serve a useful and similar purpose. On the one hand, they work literally: Lanyon gives Utterson an envelope within an envelope. However, they also work to build suspense: within a message is a hidden message. Perhaps within a self there is a second hidden self? Since Utterson

doesn't open the inner message, this is another form of suspenseful delay. Both Lanyon and Utterson keep the letter contained as a way of exerting power over its contents. This is similar to how Utterson practices self-discipline. Whereas Jekyll, as readers will eventually learn, intentionally opens the door to his inner passions, Utterson consciously works to keep these doors closed.

Lanyon's death serves several functions. It is another sin or crime readers can lay at Hyde's feet, along with the trampled and frightened girl and Carew's death. It also breaks the circle of friends and further isolates Utterson and Jekyll. Neither man has as much help as he used to in dealing with Hyde. Symbolically, since Lanyon is a man of science and has broken with Jekyll in the past over science, his death removes science from the narrative. From now on law and ethics must deal with the mystery of Hyde without science's help.

## Chapter 7

### Summary

One Sunday Utterson and Enfield go for a walk. As they pass by the door into which Hyde had gone in the first chapter, the conversation turns to Hyde. Enfield suggests they will never see him again. Both men explain how meeting Hyde filled them with revulsion. Enfield then admits he feels foolish that he didn't know the door led to Jekyll's home, at which Utterson says he's worried about Jekyll and suggests they step into the courtyard. From there they view Jekyll sitting at a window. They invite him out and, since he looks unhealthy, suggest that getting outside will be good for his health. Jekyll turns them down, saying it is impossible for him to come out just then. Nevertheless, they agree to talk where they are, and everyone is happy. Suddenly, however, Jekyll looks terrified. The window slams shut, and Jekyll disappears without a word. His two friends walk away, silent for a time but very disturbed.

### Analysis

Here again Stevenson uses classic techniques from Gothic and horror fiction: he shows just a glimpse of something along with a character's response to it, and then prevents the reader from learning any more. In this case Utterson and Enfield stand

in for the reader. When Jekyll disappears from their sight, he disappears from the reader's view as well. This episode builds yet more suspense. Readers will later learn that Jekyll has to flee the window because he is losing control of his physical form: he is changing into Hyde.

The different stages of the chapter work together well. It is no accident that Utterson and Enfield are discussing Hyde before they see Jekyll. It makes logical sense, as they are in view of the door discussed in the first chapter. It also makes social sense: Hyde is a public topic of conversation in London. And finally, it makes narrative sense. Without Stevenson coming out and saying "think of Hyde when you see Jekyll," having one topic follow another links them logically and emotionally. Stevenson is foreshadowing and underscoring their intimacy.

## Chapter 8

### Summary

Some time later Utterson is sitting home alone when Jekyll's butler, Poole, visits him. Poole is afraid something has happened to Jekyll, though he won't say what. He asks Utterson to come with him to investigate. They leave immediately, and when they arrive at Jekyll's, the rest of the servants are assembled and are frightened.

Poole guides Utterson to the laboratory door and calls in to Jekyll, telling him Utterson is there to visit. Jekyll refuses to see Utterson, and Poole does not insist but instead guides Utterson away so they can talk in private. Poole insists that it is not Jekyll's voice and that someone did away with Jekyll eight days ago. When Utterson challenges this story, Poole gives his evidence. Jekyll sometimes left written orders for his servants. That's the only way this strange person in the lab has been communicating. Poole shows Utterson one of the notes, written to a chemical merchant. The tone of the note is demanding, even desperate. In addition Poole has caught one actual glimpse of the man in the lab. The figure is too small to be Jekyll, and the person wears a mask. Poole is sure Jekyll has been murdered. Poole and Utterson conclude that it must be Hyde in the lab, and they agree to break down the door. They send two servants around back with sticks to capture the man if he tries to run that way. Utterson arms himself with a fireplace poker while Poole gets an axe. Then Utterson

demands to see Jekyll or he will break down the door. Whoever is inside begs them not to insist, but they hold firm, and Poole chops through the door. Once it is down they find Edward Hyde. He has poisoned himself and is dying. Poole and Utterson search, but they can't find any trace of Dr. Jekyll. They do find some chemicals, which Poole identifies as the drug he brought Jekyll. On another table they find an envelope addressed to Utterson. Inside there is a copy of Jekyll's will, which has been changed to leave everything to Utterson instead of Hyde, and a letter to Utterson from Jekyll. It is brief and says mainly that Jekyll has disappeared and Utterson should read the enclosed accounts.

## Analysis

With plenty of dramatic tension, this chapter provides many of the novella's high points. It begins quietly enough as Poole visits Utterson and urges him to help him discover who is in the laboratory. From there the drama and suspense increase as the story advances to its climax, which occurs when Utterson and Poole arrive at the house. The fact that the servants are assembled rather than off working at their assigned tasks, as they would be in a functional household, is a forceful sign that something is very wrong. Stevenson heightens the tension through the servants' reactions.

Poole's response to Jekyll's situation provides a useful commentary on class relations at this time, as does the reaction of the other servants. They are deeply concerned about Jekyll but don't feel they can take action themselves. Nor do they approach the police or simply leave the house. They are emotionally, socially, and economically bound to their master's household, and, as members of that household, they wish to keep his affairs private. Therefore, it is clear when Poole approaches Utterson about Jekyll that something is very wrong in the house.

Poole's reasoning about the situation also provides insight into class structure during this period. Poole's reasoning is methodical. He insists on evidence and can provide it, including eyewitness accounts and physical evidence in the form of the note "Jekyll" shared with his servants. His reasoning is, in short, as solid as any reasoning Utterson provides. Readers can draw two conclusions from these observations. First, Hyde's perversions are upsetting to all classes, not just the upper class. Second, a strict distinction among classes is artificial: all people regardless of class have an equal ability to think and

reason logically.

## Chapter 9

### Summary

The narrator changes abruptly as this chapter opens, with Dr. Lanyon picking up the story. He begins by explaining how he came in possession of a letter from Jekyll. The letter, dated the previous month, follows. In it Jekyll begs Lanyon to come as soon as he gets the letter, no matter what he's doing. When he gets there, Lanyon will find Poole waiting with a locksmith. Lanyon is to force the door to Jekyll's cabinet and remove the contents of the drawer labeled "E," which holds some powders and papers. He is then to return to his residence and wait for someone who will arrive to pick up the contents of the drawer.

After the letter Lanyon's account continues. As directed, he went to Jekyll's and gathered the materials. The tincture is something Jekyll made, and the papers are records of his experiments. Lanyon concludes that Jekyll is fighting some form of mental illness. He starts to worry and arms himself with a pistol.

Shortly after midnight someone knocks on the door. It is a small, disturbing man wearing clothes that are too big for him. Lanyon recounts that his appearance should be funny but is, in fact, revolting. The man pressures Lanyon for the things he got from Jekyll's, but Lanyon insists on an introduction first. The man introduces himself as Mr. Hyde. Satisfied, Lanyon shows him where the contents of the drawer are. Hyde asks for a "graduated glass" and uses it to mix the salts. The mixture bubbles, smokes, and changes color. The visitor then asks Lanyon if he should leave with the glass, or if "the greed of curiosity" has caught hold of Lanyon. Lanyon insists that he wants to see what happens next, even if it seems unbelievable. Hyde drinks the tincture, and transforms into Henry Jekyll.

"My life is shaken to the roots," Lanyon concludes as the chapter draws to an end.

### Analysis

Readers will immediately notice the sudden shift in narrators as the anonymous third-person narrator who has told the story

thus far is suddenly replaced by Dr. Lanyon's voice. His narrative reveals that Hyde and Jekyll are the same person, or that one can turn into the other through the use of some mixture or potion. It is like a second climax to the book. This information resolves a great deal of the narrative tension created throughout the book. Readers no longer have to wonder along with Utterson if Hyde is blackmailing Jekyll or fear along with Poole that Hyde killed Jekyll. They now know.

However, while Lanyon's narrative answers one set of questions, it creates another set. How did Jekyll do this, and why? These questions revolve around the themes of the divided self and good versus evil, and they carry a fairly strong emotional charge because the characters in the novella universally find Hyde revolting and disturbing. Why would a respected doctor like Jekyll, a man of science, willingly transform into this loathsome creature? This question also generates another set of questions that point the reader beyond the limits of the story. If someone like Jekyll can do this, can act this way, what about the honorable people readers meet every day on the street? Does each of them have a secret Mr. Hyde inside? Does the reader? Is evil within each person, and in the right circumstances could anyone become pure evil and—like Hyde—enjoy it?

## Chapter 10

### Summary

Dr. Jekyll narrates this final chapter by way of a letter explaining what he did and why. It starts with a brief biographical sketch in which he admits that he has led a dishonest life, acting one way in public and another in private. His scientific studies align with this personal reality, showing him that the individual is not just one person but two. Jekyll then sets out to split these two identities. Through research Jekyll formulates a drug that creates a second body and face with its own half of the original personality. He puts off testing the potion for a long time because he knows he is risking his life to use it. Eventually, however, he tries it and finds it to be agonizingly painful. But it works. It leaves him feeling "younger, lighter," and "happier in body." As Edward Hyde, Jekyll is free to be "tenfold more wicked" than he has been in his original combined self. Hyde is smaller than Jekyll because he has not exercised this part of his personality to the same degree.

Therefore, the body is not as developed. As he examines the evil face of Hyde for the first time, Jekyll realizes that his intention has determined the result of his experiment. If he has followed good intentions, the drug would have changed him for the better.

Jekyll embraces the reality of having a second self. He tells his servants that Hyde has access to the house, and he revises his will in Hyde's favor. He then begins to enjoy being Hyde. In this persona, he starts with "undignified" pleasures and moves on to "monstrous" ones. About two months before the Carew murder, something disturbing happens: he falls asleep as Jekyll but awakens as Hyde. This marks a shift in general balance. Early on, the challenge had been to "throw off" Jekyll's body, but now Hyde seems to be the more natural state. Jekyll explains that he and Hyde share a memory, so he has full knowledge of Hyde's activities. But all other faculties and emotions are unevenly shared.

Jekyll then puts Hyde aside for two months. When he lets him emerge again, his passions are more intense. That's when he murders Carew. Once everyone is looking for Hyde, Jekyll uses that threat to keep Hyde contained, and the ploy works for a while. Jekyll tries to make up for his past sins with good deeds, but Jekyll's drug has ruined his balance, and he eventually changes to Hyde while he is conscious and in public and without using the drug at all. At this point Jekyll's fear changes. He used to be afraid of being executed for murdering Carew, but now he is afraid of living as Hyde.

Fearing for his life, Hyde writes letters to Poole and Lanyon. He then appears at Lanyon's, where he changes back to Jekyll. Exhausted, he goes home to sleep. When he wakes up he has breakfast and then spontaneously changes to Hyde again. Hyde's power seems to grow as Jekyll weakens—and Hyde's hatred for Jekyll grows as well. He tries to make a new batch of the drug, but it doesn't work. He eventually concludes that some mysterious impurity in the original batch is what has allowed it to work its transformation. Jekyll takes the last of his original batch to give him some control for a time, but he ends his letter unsure what will happen.

### Analysis

This chapter is an extended denouement. It comes after the climax (or the double climax of Jekyll's death and Hyde's transformation), which in many cases would mean readers get

a brief wrap up followed by an explanation that carries or creates very little tension. This chapter serves those functions—it wraps up the story and explains all previously mysterious events—but it carries much more weight than most final explanations.

Some of this is due to the sheer number of plot-related mysteries Stevenson has managed to keep suspended throughout the course of the story. More of it, though, is due to how Jekyll's explanation continues to draw readers more deeply into a consideration of the novella's core themes. The chapter's opening line underscores the role of class in this novella: all of this was possible because Jekyll was born "to a large fortune." That gives him the money and freedom to implement his scientific investigations and indulge his darker passions.

The next key point is that Jekyll casts his investigations as a kind of honesty. Surely everyone has dark desires they indulge in private, and yet they still want to be respected in public. But Jekyll insists on a kind of elevated honesty, one that results in a kind of ethical purity. He's not willing to lead this divided life. At the same time, this reveals a striking twist to Jekyll's character. He's driven to his investigations because he feels his shame more intensely than most people: it is the depth and intensity of his emotions that spur him on.

He also casts himself as a scientific visionary. Other people might speculate on what a person's true nature is, but Henry Jekyll knows. Jekyll has discovered, he says, true human nature. A person has a divided self: "man is not truly one, but two." However, while Jekyll's explicit discussion of the theme of divided self that defines this book is essential to it, his comments do not simplify the narrative. In fact they complicate it. In the very first paragraph, Jekyll admits he was "committed to a profound duplicity of life." This duplicity, in which he is already committed to a double life before he begins his research, is profoundly anti-scientific. A scientist who sets out to confirm a position he or she already holds is likely to produce bad science. As forthright as it seems, Jekyll's discussion of his split self is also dishonest in many ways. He says he is not a hypocrite because he feels both sides of his nature earnestly. However, that's not the definition of a hypocrisy. Jekyll engages in immoral actions but lets only his ethical face be seen in public. In that sense he is a hypocrite. He's just subtler about it than some. At times he misdirects readers, referring to the two sides of his intelligence, "the moral and the intellectual." If those were the two sides at war in

Henry Jekyll, this would be a very different book. The two sides at war are the acceptable public side, which includes both the moral and intellectual side of Jekyll, and the dark, hidden side: the violent, sexual, and passionate side.

In Chapter 2 Utterson noted that there was something "troglodytic" about Edward Hyde. In this final chapter Henry Jekyll markedly complicates this developmental perspective. On the one hand, Hyde could be seen as an evolutionary advance. Before Hyde all who had lived were a blend of good and evil. Hyde, though, is pure—albeit pure evil. However, as Jekyll notes, Hyde is "smaller, slighter, and younger" than Jekyll. Tagging him as "younger" makes it seem that what society calls evil is just the natural passion of youth, and that ethics comes with maturity. In this, Hyde seems like a living version of the Freudian id, the portion of the human self forever driven by primal passions.

At the same time he claims an unprecedented intellectual breakthrough, Jekyll claims a kind of modesty, acknowledging that others might go further and find a multitude of selves in each person. Because Stevenson has Jekyll emphasize his own honesty and humility early in his explanation, it colors the rest of the chapter. Readers want to believe Jekyll. However, if they reflect on whether they should trust him or not, the answer is no, definitely not. By his own account, the potion Jekyll invents changes his body, face, ethical character, and mental function. The only thing Jekyll shares with Hyde is a memory. By the time he writes this account, Jekyll is by his own admission no longer in control. He's trapped in Hyde's identity. As evidence of this, he can't make a new batch of his tincture. He says it must be because of an unknown imperfection in the original materials, one he can't reproduce. But, again, can he be trusted? As breathtaking as the entire story of a man splitting himself in two is, readers should also be left with a pervasive sense of uneasiness: can they trust what they are reading?

This lack of a final answer is common in Gothic literature and relates to the sense of the uncanny generated by Hyde. Gothic literature expresses the shadow side of 19th century scientific progress. This progress gave England factories, railroads, and an expanding economy. It also removed or weakened sources of social stability and psychological certainty, as when Darwin's theory of evolution undercut humanity's claim to special status. In the end one of the defining characteristics of Gothic literature is doubt. This is created through using, as Stevenson does here, narratives within narratives, incomplete narratives, and, in the case of this final chapter, unreliable narratives. The

reader must ultimately decide whom to trust ... and if he or she has a self as splintered as Jekyll's.

## “” Quotes

*"I incline to Cain's heresy,' he used to say quaintly: 'I let my brother go to the devil in his own way.'"*

— Utterson, Chapter 1

The Cain that Utterson refers to is a character from Genesis in the Bible. Cain and Abel were brothers, sons of Adam and Eve. When the two brothers offered sacrifices to God, God preferred Abel's sacrifice, and Cain killed his brother out of jealousy. For Utterson to refer to himself this way shows a fine and subtle sense of humor. It also quietly signals two of the book's themes: the battle of good and evil, and the divided self. As Cain and Abel were yoked together until one killed the other, so are Jekyll and Hyde connected.

*"It wasn't like a man; it was like some damned Juggernaut."*

— Enfield, Chapter 1

The term *juggernaut* was taken from a term in Indian culture, the Jagganath, which was an idol of the god Krishna. It was pulled through the streets on carts or "temple cars," and the very religious were said to throw themselves under the wheels of the carts to be crushed to death.

The term has come to mean any force that's so strong as to be unstoppable. Whether Enfield intended the general meaning or the more specific one—which many British readers would have known due to the British Empire's presence in India—using the term to describe Hyde's tramping on a little girl does a fine job of showing the inhumanity of his actions and how unstoppable he seems.

*"If you choose to make capital out of this accident,' said he, 'I am naturally helpless. No gentleman but wishes to avoid a scene,' says he. 'Name your figure.'"*

— Mr. Hyde, Chapter 1

Mr. Enfield quotes Mr. Hyde as he describes to Utterson his first encounter with Hyde. These are Hyde's first words in the novella.

Three things make this statement striking. First, Hyde says them immediately after trampling a girl. The idea that he would still be concerned about being a gentleman signals how truly strange he is. Second, Hyde suggests he is "naturally helpless." For such a creature to be concerned about what is natural is, again, very strange. Finally, the idea that others would want to benefit from the girl's suffering—and that Hyde would know it—is also striking. It suggests that no matter how strange he seems, Hyde understands the group confronting him, and they all share common interests.

*"I feel very strongly about putting questions; it partakes too much of the style of the day of judgment. You start a question, and it's like starting a stone. You sit quietly on the top of a hill; and away the stone goes, starting others; and presently some bland old bird ... is knocked on the head in his own back-garden and the family have to change their name. No, sir, I make it a rule of mine: the more it looks like Queer Street, the less I*

ask."

— Enfield, Chapter 1

Enfield's statement, which seems at first to be a kind of self-discipline, ends up supporting social hypocrisy. Enfield doesn't say that he doesn't ask questions in cases when there's nothing to ask. He says he's concerned that he might accidentally show that a respected family doesn't deserve the respect they are getting. In other words, he's supporting social lies over reality.

In addition, the more things look like "Queer Street" (which meant wrong or odd), the more people need to ask questions if they are going to understand them.

These lines are also important because Enfield's specific example of the danger of asking questions (an "old bird" getting "knocked on the head") foreshadows Hyde's murder of Danvers Carew.

*"He is not easy to describe. There is something wrong with his appearance; something displeasing, something downright detestable. I never saw a man I so disliked, and yet I scarce know why. He must be deformed somewhere; he gives a strong feeling of deformity, although I couldn't specify the point."*

— Enfield, Chapter 1

Enfield's description of Hyde fits a quality common to Gothic novels and horror fiction. Hyde's appearance is disturbing because it creates strong impressions, but somehow despite his being an educated and articulate man, Enfield can't identify exactly what it is that creates this impression. Other characters have similar responses to Hyde throughout the

novella.

*"If he be Mr. Hyde,' he had thought, 'I shall be Mr. Seek.'"*

— Utterson, Chapter 2

In this statement Utterson is acknowledging the appropriateness of Edward Hyde's name. He is someone who hides or is hidden. A closely related meaning is that despite the deaths and the shocking horror with which people respond to events, there's something childlike about this novella. The whole thing is like a giant game of Hide and Seek: where is Edward Hyde hiding?

Another meaning refers to transformation. Jekyll may have changed himself into Hyde, but Mr. Hyde changes others as well when they encounter him.

*"There is something more, if I could find a name for it. God bless me, the man seems hardly human! Something troglodytic, shall we say? or can it be the old story of Dr. Fell? or is it the mere radiance of a foul soul that thus transpires through, and transfigures, its clay continent? The last, I think; for, O my poor old Harry Jekyll, if ever I read Satan's signature upon a face, it is on that of your new friend."*

— Utterson, Chapter 2

Many characters try to describe Mr. Hyde, and several try to

explain why his appearance is so disturbing. But Utterson makes the most frequent and extended attempts. Here he suggests three reasons why Hyde is disturbing to look at. The first is that rather than looking like a normal person, Hyde looks like a troglodyte, or cave man. This reintroduces the period concern over evolution. The second suggestion refers to a brief satirical poem from the 17th century in which the speaker says, "I do not like thee Dr. Fell/The reason why, I cannot tell." In short Utterson says he might dislike Hyde for no reason at all, or at least for no reason he can name. The third reason is simplest: Hyde is disturbing to look at because his spirit is evil or satanic.

*"As for the moral turpitude that man unveiled to me, even with tears of penitence, I cannot, even in memory, dwell on it without a start of horror. I will say but one thing, Utterson, and that (if you can bring your mind to credit it) will be more than enough. The creature who crept into my house that night was, on Jekyll's own confession, known by the name of Hyde and hunted for in every corner of the land as the murderer of Carew."*

— Lanyon, Chapter 9

This passage demonstrates how Hyde affects people. Dr. Lanyon is a man of science, and yet learning about Hyde's actions are so disgusting that he can't even think of them without shuddering in horror. This completes the social spectrum in the novella: servants, lawyers, doctors, housekeepers, and parents are all horrified by Hyde. Since "Dr. Lanyon's Narrative" falls late in the work, it serves to remind readers of Hyde's character. They should read the final

chapter asking, "Why would anyone ever want to be Mr. Hyde?"

*"I have observed that when I wore the semblance of Edward Hyde, none could come near to me at first without a visible misgiving of the flesh. This, as I take it, was because all human beings, as we meet them, are commingled out of good and evil: and Edward Hyde, alone in the ranks of mankind, was pure evil."*

— Dr. Jekyll, Chapter 10

These are the final lines of an extended passage in which Jekyll describes what Hyde was like. Earlier he describes Hyde as shorter and smaller, as if he were younger. He also, however, recognizes this face as his own and says it is "livelier" than his face as Jekyll.

This passage also tells the reader a great deal about Jekyll. He understands that people don't like Hyde, yet he still continues to transform into Hyde. Jekyll puts his own desires above the wishes of other people, which is exactly what Hyde does all the time. This shows Hyde really is part of him.

The quote additionally shows how Jekyll views Hyde and himself. He knows he is not all good; he sees himself, like all other people, as a mix of good and evil. Hyde is both unnatural and unique, because he is the only purely evil person anyone will ever encounter.

*"Yes, I had gone to bed Henry Jekyll, I had awakened Edward Hyde. How was this to be explained? I asked myself; and*

*then, with another bound of terror—how was it to be remedied?"*

— Dr. Jekyll, Chapter 10

While other characters might find the moment when Hyde tramples the little girl to be a clear sign Jekyll has lost control, this is the moment when Jekyll himself recognizes this fact. It isn't that he becomes Hyde. It is that he becomes Hyde without his conscious choice.

Symbolically, it matters that the transformation happens in bed. No one is responsible for his or her dreams, and many people imagine doing things in dreams they would never do when awake. This is like a nightmare come to life. On the plot level, this event raises the stakes incredibly. If Jekyll can't control who he is anymore, his evil actions will be exposed.

*"Men have before hired bravos to transact their crimes, while their own person and reputation sat under shelter. I was the first that ever did so for his pleasures. I was the first that could thus plod in the public eye with a load of genial respectability, and in a moment, like a schoolboy, strip off these lendings and spring headlong into the sea of liberty. But for me, in my impenetrable mantle, the safety was complete. Think of it—I did not even exist!"*

— Dr. Jekyll, Chapter 10

This statement gives a clear sense of how Dr. Jekyll views his actions in creating Hyde. He minimizes his arrogance in tampering with the human psyche. Creating Hyde is, according to Jekyll, like hiring a thug to commit crimes.

This passage also shows why Hyde is so attractive to Jekyll—and might be to anyone. It's like being invisible. No matter what he does, Jekyll can completely escape blame for the actions. The passage also foreshadows later events—and does so with a tremendous irony. Jekyll's safety is not "complete," as he says here. In fact Hyde's actions put him in more trouble than anything he could have done on his own. And when he says he did not even exist, that is ironic because Hyde soon displaces Jekyll and becomes real while Jekyll fades away. Jekyll's only out is to kill himself, wiping out both his and Hyde's existence.

*"Will Hyde die upon the scaffold? or will he find courage to release himself at the last moment? God knows; I am careless; this is my true hour of death, and what is to follow concerns another than myself. Here then, as I lay down the pen and proceed to seal up my confession, I bring the life of that unhappy Henry Jekyll to an end."*

— Dr. Jekyll, Chapter 10

These are the final words in the novella. Because they are read after Jekyll's death, there is dramatic irony to them. The reader already knows what happens, even if Jekyll dies without learning.

These words are also very profound. This is essentially a long and articulate farewell letter, or possibly a suicide note if Hyde becomes aware of what Jekyll is writing. As he closes his explanation of what he did and why, Jekyll also acknowledges that the life he once knew is over, and his actions were the ones to end it.

In classical Greek tragedy, the hero often had a tragic flaw that led to his fall and often his death. Whatever the specific details of that flaw, arrogance was almost always part of it—the idea that a man could control his own fate. Readers can see that sort of profound arrogance and its outcome here. Henry Jekyll thought he could split himself into two people, so he could indulge his base passions freely. He could, and he did. And he died as a result.

## Symbols

### Darkness

Darkness is the realm of Mr. Hyde, and he is described as having a "dark influence" on the world. Hyde moves about mostly at night, committing his terrible deeds. Night therefore comes to be the time when readers expect dreadful, evil things to happen in the novella. The darkness extends as well to shadows and fog, creating a sense of gloom along with an inability to see things clearly.

### Houses

In Jungian psychology the house represents the psyche of a person, so the state of the house gives clues to the state of the psyche. The front of a house is the public persona. The back of the house is the part hidden away and kept private. In this novella Dr. Jekyll greets people through the front of the house, while Hyde enters through the back, using a door that not everyone knows accesses Jekyll's house. Hyde, tellingly, has an entire house but uses only two rooms of it; the rest sits empty. This symbolizes Hyde's limited development, his possession of only a few aspects of the human psyche.

### Doors

A person passes through a door to enter a house. In Jungian therapy and other systems, doors are passageways between worlds. A locked door, like the one Jekyll uses to keep both his friends and his servants out, is an attempt to control one's reality. When Poole and Utterson break down Jekyll's locked door, they are symbolically doing what Jekyll has already done to himself with his tincture: forcing access to his private, inner self.

### The Walking Stick

In Victorian England gentlemen often carried walking sticks. They served both as weapons, if the need arose, and as signs of belonging to a higher social class. In this novella Enfield uses his cane to point out the door associated with Mr. Hyde in the first chapter. But whereas Enfield's cane remains intact, Hyde breaks his when he beats Sir Danvers Carew to death. This symbolizes the break in Jekyll's identity and in his use of Hyde as a cover story. When Hyde takes his broken walking stick back to his house and leaves it there, it serves as evidence that he killed Carew. More importantly, it shows Hyde so removed from normal life that he no longer thinks of such things. It may also demonstrate that he has no fear or does not feel guilt.

### Clothing

Clothing is an external representation of one's self. In a society with clear class distinctions such as those in Victorian England, this is not subconscious or subtle. It is conscious, straightforward, and literal: servants wear livery, gentlemen dress formally, judges wear robes, and so on. The point at which clothing becomes symbolic in this novella is when Dr. Jekyll changes into Mr. Hyde. Because Hyde is physically smaller than Jekyll, Jekyll's clothes do not fit him. This can be read in several different ways, all of which work. Hyde is, as Jekyll said, younger than his creator. Hyde is not as mature or

fully developed as Jekyll. He's not a complete human. Jekyll is a composite of good and evil, whereas Hyde is just evil, and so some of the original self is missing.

## Themes

### Good and Evil

In his letter that forms the final chapter of this novella, Dr. Jekyll explicitly identifies one of the core themes in this work: good and evil. Although that sounds straightforward enough, the reality ends up being more complicated. The first time Jekyll takes his "tincture" (drug mixed with alcohol) he feels "younger, lighter, happier in body." He is more sensual. Though he says he is "tenfold more wicked," some of what he's describing is simply being younger. What is evil for Jekyll, and for British society at this time, is to be young, physical, sensual, and passionate. At another point in this final chapter, Jekyll describes the pleasures he enjoys being Hyde as "undignified." Evil in this society is the private, passionate, and physical. Good is the public, the mental, and the spiritual.

### The Divided Self

The most obvious and literal divided self is Dr. Jekyll. He consciously and literally splits himself into two people, so he can retain the good reputation of his public self, Henry Jekyll, while indulging his dark passions as Edward Hyde. The first question, then, is *What exactly are these divided selves?* At times it seems like it might be a simple good/evil split: Jekyll is good, Hyde is evil. Other times, though, it is more complicated. When Hyde tramples a little girl in the first chapter, he still wants to retain a gentleman's good reputation (though it isn't clear why). In the final chapter, Jekyll explains his perspective: Hyde is pure evil, while Jekyll is a composite of good and evil. This particular division has occurred, Jekyll says, because of his intention when taking the drug. If he'd wanted to create a purely good version of himself, the potion he made would have done so rather than creating the evil one. At various times this

novella seems to recount a war existing within a self among stages of evolution. Utterson sees Hyde as having something "troglodytic" in his face, which would make this a war between cave man and modern man. However, when Jekyll refers to Hyde as "younger," the war would seem to be between a younger, passionate self and a more mature and disciplined self.

### Self-Control

The opening pages of this novella describe Utterson's constant self-discipline. It is a way of making self-control habitual. Dr. Jekyll, in contrast, uses his scientific knowledge to escape self-control. Once he creates a tincture that frees Hyde as his evil side, Jekyll doesn't have to exercise self-control. He can let Hyde run wild. This leads to a profound and bitter situational irony for Jekyll: once he lets Hyde run free, he can't get him back under control again. Jekyll goes to bed one person and wakes up another, losing control of himself on a literal, physical level. In the end the only way he can get this control back is by killing himself.

### Class

In Victorian England people were expected to act in certain ways as defined by the class to which they belonged. As a member of the upper class, Dr. Jekyll is expected to behave carefully and properly and, indeed, to do so willingly as a true gentleman would. This is part of the reason his decision not to repress his lower urges is so shocking to his peers. They react based not only on a disgust for evil but also on shock that one of them would be so careless. Dr. Jekyll's action flies in the face of social rules and values by letting out his base nature in the form of Mr. Hyde, whose violence and unchecked sexuality show a complete disregard for strict codes.

The servants in the story also highlight the strong hold the notion of class has across all of society. Even when terribly concerned about Dr. Jekyll, his servants refuse to cross any lines of propriety. And the strength of Poole's character in particular shows just how artificial are the ideas labeling

people as different in their abilities to think and feel according to their class.

Veeder, William, and Gordon Hirsh. *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde After 100 Years*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1988. Print.

## Inquiry

Throughout this story people pursue different methods of inquiry and investigation—or they refuse to do so. Enfield is the first character who refuses to follow questions to their end—he even refuses to ask them. In the first chapter he makes a point of saying that if something looks like "Queer Street," he makes a point of not asking questions about it. Strikingly, he doesn't do this because there isn't anything to learn or because learning things is wrong, but rather because asking these questions can lead to making judgments.

On the other hand, throughout the novella, understanding how to seek the truth properly and doing so successfully is shown to be essential. This takes many forms: Enfield pressures Hyde for money in the first chapter; Utterson pressures Hyde to see his face in the second chapter; and Poole collects evidence to present to Utterson about Jekyll's fate later in the narrative.

If that weren't complicated enough, Jekyll shows the danger of improper inquiry. He asks questions that people should be cautious in asking and follows his discoveries to places people should possibly not go. The result is a horrible creation—a single-mindedly evil person. His own death and the deaths of others are other irrevocable consequences. One can take the lesson further by wondering what might happen to society if Jekyll's potion becomes widely available.

## Suggested Reading

Campbell, James. "The Beast Within." *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, 13 Dec. 2008. Web. 19 Aug. 2016.

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