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Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

Robert Louis Stevenson · *1886 · original English text*

A London lawyer hears of a brutish man who has a strange hold on the respectable Dr Jekyll. The truth, when it comes, is not a mere trick of science. Jekyll has found a way to loose the evil in himself, and finds he cannot lock the door again. Stevenson writes a fable of division, habit, and a soul that will not be split without cost.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

If a man tries to put his evil into another self, so that the respectable self may walk clean, what happens to both?

"that man is not truly one, but truly two."

Henry Jekyll · Henry Jekyll's Full Statement of the Case

Jekyll learns that man is not truly one, but truly two—and that Hyde, loosed, will not remain a servant. The draught that was a door becomes a trap. All ordinary people, he says, are commingled of good and evil; Hyde alone was pure evil. There is no city of refuge left, and the statement ends in a will to die rather than let Hyde go free.

KEY CHARACTERS

Dr Henry Jekyll
A respected physician who would split his evil from his name, and loses both

Edward Hyde
The smaller, younger, purely evil self, whose deformity others feel before they can name

Gabriel John Utterson
The lawyer-friend, slow, loyal, who follows the case to the cabinet door

Dr Hastie Lanyon
A fellow physician, at odds with Jekyll's "fanciful" science, destroyed by seeing it

Poole
Jekyll's butler, who knows his master's step and knows when the step is wrong

Richard Enfield
Utterson's kinsman, who first tells the story of the door

Sir Danvers Carew
A member of Parliament, murdered in the street, the crime that makes hiding impossible

TWO, AND A DEVIL UNCASED

> *"that man is not truly one, but truly two."*
>
> **Henry Jekyll** · Henry Jekyll's Full Statement of the Case

> *"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."*
>
> **Henry Jekyll** · Henry Jekyll's Full Statement of the Case

Grades 9–12
Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01
The Story of the Door
CHAPTERS "STORY OF THE DOOR" TO "DR. JEKYLL WAS QUITE AT EASE"

A lawyer is told of a man who trampled a child, and of a house with two faces.

- Mr. Utterson, a dry and loyal solicitor, hears from his cousin Enfield of a man named Hyde who crushed a girl in the street and paid with a cheque signed by a respectable name
- The door in the by-street belongs, Utterson realizes, to the rear of Dr Jekyll's house
- Jekyll's will leaves all to Edward Hyde; Utterson, as lawyer and friend, is afraid
- Jekyll asks him to bear with Hyde, and says he can be rid of the man the moment he chooses

02
The Carew Murder
CHAPTERS "THE CAREW MURDER CASE" TO "INCIDENT OF THE LETTER"

A crime in the night, and a letter that will not bear inspection.

- Sir Danvers Carew is beaten to death; a maid sees Hyde do it with a cane Utterson recognizes
- Hyde's lodgings are a wreck; the murderer has fled
- Jekyll shows Utterson a letter, supposedly from Hyde, promising disappearance
- Mr. Guest, looking at the hand, finds the letter's writing strangely like Jekyll's own

03
The Window and the Cabinet
CHAPTERS "INCIDENT AT THE WINDOW" TO "THE LAST NIGHT"

A friend's face changes in an instant, and the cabinet is broken in.

- Utterson and Enfield see Jekyll at the window, a sudden terror, and the window is shut
- Dr. Lanyon, once Jekyll's friend, is dying of a shock he will not yet tell
- Poole comes to Utterson: the doctor has locked himself in, and the voice is not his voice
- They break in and find a body of Hyde, still twitching, and Jekyll's papers for his friends

04
Lanyon's Narrative
"DR. LANYON'S NARRATIVE"

A man of science is asked to watch a transformation, and cannot bear the world after.

- Jekyll, in a desperate letter, sends Lanyon to the cabinet for a drawer of powders and a vial
- A small man in overlarge clothes comes at midnight and drinks the mixture
- Hyde becomes Jekyll before Lanyon's eyes
- Lanyon's reality is broken; he writes the narrative and dies of the shock

05
The Full Statement of the Case
"HENRY JEKYLL'S FULL STATEMENT OF THE CASE"

The doctor tells the truth: a divided life, a loosened devil, and no way back.

- Jekyll confesses a double life already lived, in secret, before any draught was mixed
- He learns, he says, that man is not truly one, but truly two, and tries to separate the parts
- Hyde, at first a servant, grows in stature; the devil, long caged, comes out roaring
- The draught fails; Jekyll can no longer stay himself; he writes the last pages as a man about to be replaced, and ends the life of Henry Jekyll

> *"that man is not truly one, but truly two."*
>
> **Henry Jekyll** · Henry Jekyll's Full Statement of the Case

Good and Evil | Self-knowledge | Habit and Bondage | Repentance refused | Friendship | The Hidden Life

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 9–12

1. Jekyll's respectable self is not innocent before the draught. He had already concealed his pleasures; the powder only gives them another body.
2. "Man is not truly one, but truly two" is Jekyll's discovery, not the book's last word. He also says ordinary people are commingled; Hyde alone was pure evil.
3. The line "the moment I choose, I can be rid of Mr. Hyde" is an early boast. The statement of the case is the proof that he could not.
4. Stevenson's chapter titles are part of the design: a lawyer's story, then a doctor's, then Jekyll's own. Read the last two in that order.
5. "My devil had been long caged, he came out roaring" is the book's picture of habit, not only of a chemical accident.
6. The title in the hosted work is Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde—no "The," and no period after Dr.

Quotations are verbatim from the original English text, Project Gutenberg #43, the public-domain text hosted at classicslaunch.org/works/the-strange-case-of-dr-jekyll-and-mr-hyde/. Citations give book and chapter (or canto and line) so every line can be checked.