

# Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

## Introduction

The “Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” shows, that in every human being there is a dark side, that can come to light one day.

## The author

Robert Louis Stevenson was born in 1850 in Edinburgh, Scotland and died in 1894 in Samoa.

He was of bad health, because of this he studied law at the university of Edinburgh instead of working in the familiar company. During his studies he began to write essays and travel reports.

In 1876 he fell in love with an American woman named Mrs. Osborne, married her and moved with her to American.

In his life he travelled a lot around the entire world e.g. to the South Sea and finally to Opolu a part of Samoa, where he died.

When he died he was at his peak of glory.

He is also well-known as the author of the famous book “Treasure Island”. He wrote many other tales, novels, essays and poetry as well.

## Background and some other facts about the book

The story of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde was written down after a horrible nightmare in only three days but because his wife didn't like it, he had to burn it and wrote it down again in a second edition.

This story is not really a novel because it is very short and can be read quickly.

The book got very good critics because of its high complexity.

## The Content of the book

The book is about a doctor, who is highly respected in society of the Victorian London, Dr. Jekyll. He swears to invent a special medicine to heal insanity. But his employer does not allow him to invent such a mixture. He is sad about it and so he goes into a pub and drinks quite a lot.

He decides to do it on his own. Although he gets engaged to Lisa Carew he doesn't give up his plan.

He makes the decision to test his mixture on his own body. After that he changes into Edward Hyde, a cruel person which lives out the evil side of Dr. Jekyll.

The evil Mr. Hyde murders Mr. Danvers a Member of Parliament, drinks a lot of alcohol and does any other imaginable evil things.

For a period of time he likes this state but by the time he wants to get rid of Mr. Hyde but it is not possible for him any more because his evil side is too strong.

Through the whole plot, Mr. Utterson and his friend Mr. Enfield try to find out the secrets of Mr. Hyde. At the end they solve the case by the help of letters written by Dr. Jekyll, Mr. Hyde and Dr. Lanyon.

## **Main characters**

### **Mr. Utterson**

He is an elderly gentleman and a lawyer. He is a personal friend to nearly all the characters of the story which is told us through his point of view. He is said to be a fair, honest and good-natured man.

### **Mr. Enfield**

Mr. Enfield is a friend of Mr. Utterson. He is very helpful and polite. He and Utterson walk together through London each Sunday.

### **Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde**

A good, friendly and well-loved elderly gentleman like Mr. Utterson, and Mr. Hyde is his dark side.

In the story there are some more second-division characters, such as Dr. Lanyon who is another friend of Utterson and Dr. Jekyll and Poole who is Jekyll's butler.

## **Why we like the book**

We like the book because it shows the possible ambivalency of people. It is interesting to read because it emphasizes the power of the evil and points out that if one gives evil an inch, it will take a mile.

## **Vocabulary**

insanity: Wahnsinn; Geisteskrankheit

engagement: Verlobung