

# *JEKYLL & HYDE* SUMMARIES

## **Chapter 1: “Story of the Door”**

Mr. Utterson is a wealthy, well-respected London lawyer, a reserved and perhaps even boring man who nevertheless inspires a strange fondness in those who know him. Despite his eminent respectability, he never abandons a friend whose reputation has been sullied or ruined.

Utterson nurtures a close friendship with Mr. Enfield, his distant relative and likewise a respectable London gentleman. The two seem to have little in common, and when they take their weekly walk together they often go for quite a distance without saying anything to one another; nevertheless, they look forward to these strolls as one of the high points of the week.

As the story begins, Utterson and Enfield are taking their regular Sunday stroll and walking down a particularly prosperous-looking street. They come upon a neglected building, which seems out of place in the neighborhood, and Enfield relates a story in connection with it. Enfield was walking in the same neighborhood late one night, when he witnessed a shrunken, misshapen man crash into and trample a young girl. He collared the man before he could get away, and then brought him back to the girl, around whom an angry crowd had gathered. The captured man appeared so overwhelmingly ugly that the crowd immediately despised him. United, the crowd threatened to ruin the ugly man’s good name unless he did something to make amends; the man, seeing himself trapped, bought them off with one hundred pounds, which he obtained upon entering the neglected building through its only door. Strangely enough, the check bore the name of a very reputable man; furthermore, and in spite of Enfield’s suspicions, it proved to be legitimate and not a forgery. Enfield hypothesizes that the ugly culprit had somehow blackmailed the man whose name appeared on the check. Spurning gossip, however, Enfield refuses to reveal that name.

Utterson then asks several pointed questions confirming the details of the incident. Enfield tries to describe the nature of the mysterious man’s ugliness but cannot express it, stating, “I never saw a man I so disliked, and yet I scarce know why.” He divulges that the culprit’s name was Hyde, and, at this point, Utterson declares that he knows the man, and notes that he can now guess the name on the check. But, as the men have just been discussing the virtue of minding one’s own business, they promptly agree never to discuss the matter again.

## **Chapter 2: “Search for Mr. Hyde”**

Utterson, prompted by his conversation with Enfield, goes home to study a will that he drew up for his close friend Dr. Jekyll. It states that in the event of the death or disappearance of Jekyll, all of his property should be given over immediately to a Mr. Edward Hyde. This strange will had long troubled Utterson, but now that he has heard something of Hyde’s behavior, he becomes more upset and feels convinced that Hyde has some peculiar power over Jekyll. Seeking to unravel the mystery, he pays a visit to Dr. Lanyon, a friend of Jekyll’s. But Lanyon has never heard of Hyde and has fallen out of communication with Jekyll as a result of a professional dispute. Lanyon refers to Jekyll’s most recent line of research as “unscientific balderdash.”

Later that night, Utterson is haunted by nightmares in which a faceless man runs down a small child and in which the same terrifying, faceless figure stands beside Jekyll’s bed and commands him to rise. Soon, Utterson begins to spend time around the run-down building where Enfield saw Hyde enter, in the hopes of catching a glimpse of Hyde. Hyde, a small young man, finally appears, and Utterson

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approaches him. Utterson introduces himself as a friend of Henry Jekyll. Hyde, keeping his head down, returns his greetings. He asks Hyde to show him his face, so that he will know him if he sees him again; Hyde complies, and, like Enfield before him, Utterson feels appalled and horrified yet cannot pinpoint exactly what makes Hyde so ugly. Hyde then offers Utterson his address, which the lawyer interprets as a sign that Hyde eagerly anticipates the death of Jekyll and the execution of his will.

After this encounter, Utterson pays a visit to Jekyll. At this point, we learn what Utterson himself has known all along: namely, that the run-down building that Hyde frequents is actually a laboratory attached to Jekyll's well-kept townhouse, which faces outward on a parallel street. Utterson is admitted into Jekyll's home by Jekyll's butler, Mr. Poole, but Jekyll is not at home. Poole tells Utterson that Hyde has a key to the laboratory and that all the servants have orders to obey Hyde. The lawyer heads home, worrying about his friend. He assumes Hyde is blackmailing Jekyll, perhaps for some wrongdoings that Jekyll committed in his youth.

## **Chapter 3: "Dr. Jekyll Was Quite at Ease"**

Two weeks later, Jekyll throws a well-attended dinner party. Utterson stays late so that the two men can speak privately. Utterson mentions the will, and Jekyll begins to make a joke about it, but he turns pale when Utterson tells him that he has been "learning something of young Hyde." Jekyll explains that the situation with Hyde is exceptional and cannot be solved by talking. He also insists that "the moment I choose, I can be rid of Mr. Hyde." But Jekyll emphasizes the great interest he currently takes in Hyde and his desire to continue to provide for him. He makes Utterson promise that he will carry out his will and testament.

## **Chapter 4: "The Carew Murder Case"**

Approximately one year later, the scene opens on a maid who, sitting at her window in the wee hours of the morning, witnesses a murder take place in the street below. She sees a small, evil-looking man, whom she recognizes as Mr. Hyde, encounter a polite, aged gentleman; when the gentleman offers Hyde a greeting, Hyde suddenly turns on him with a stick, beating him to death. The police find a letter addressed to Utterson on the dead body, and they consequently summon the lawyer. He identifies the body as Sir Danvers Carew, a popular member of Parliament and one of his clients.

Utterson still has Hyde's address, and he accompanies the police to a set of rooms located in a poor, evil-looking part of town. Utterson reflects on how odd it is that a man who lives in such squalor is the heir to Henry Jekyll's fortune. Hyde's villainous-looking landlady lets the men in, but the suspected murderer is not at home. The police find the murder weapon and the burned remains of Hyde's checkbook. Upon a subsequent visit to the bank, the police inspector learns that Hyde still has an account there. The officer assumes that he need only wait for Hyde to go and withdraw money. In the days and weeks that follow, however, no sign of Hyde turns up; he has no family, no friends, and those who have seen him are unable to give accurate descriptions, differ on details, and agree only on the evil aspect of his appearance.

## **Chapter 5: "Incident of the Letter"**

Utterson calls on Jekyll, whom he finds in his laboratory looking deathly ill. Jekyll feverishly claims that Hyde has left and that their relationship has ended. He also assures Utterson that the police shall never find the man. Jekyll then shows Utterson a letter and asks him what he should do with it, since he fears it could damage his reputation if he turns it over to the police. The letter is from Hyde,

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assuring Jekyll that he has means of escape, that Jekyll should not worry about him, and that he deems himself unworthy of Jekyll's great generosity. Utterson asks if Hyde dictated the terms of Jekyll's will—especially its insistence that Hyde inherit in the event of Jekyll's—"disappearance." Jekyll replies in the affirmative, and Utterson tells his friend that Hyde probably meant to murder him and that he has had a near escape. He takes the letter and departs.

On his way out, Utterson runs into Poole, the butler, and asks him to describe the man who delivered the letter; Poole, taken aback, claims to have no knowledge of any letters being delivered other than the usual mail. That night, over drinks, Utterson consults his trusted clerk, Mr. Guest, who is an expert on handwriting. Guest compares Hyde's letter with some of Jekyll's own writing and suggests that the same hand inscribed both; Hyde's script merely leans in the opposite direction, as if for the purpose of concealment. Utterson reacts with alarm at the thought that Jekyll would forge a letter for a murderer.

## **Chapter 6: "Remarkable Incident of Dr. Lanyon"**

As time passes, with no sign of Hyde's reappearance, Jekyll becomes healthier-looking and more sociable, devoting himself to charity. To Utterson, it appears that the removal of Hyde's evil influence has had a tremendously positive effect on Jekyll. After two months of this placid lifestyle, Jekyll holds a dinner party, which both Utterson and Lanyon attend, and the three talk together as old friends. But a few days later, when Utterson calls on Jekyll, Poole reports that his master is receiving no visitors.

This scenario repeats itself for a week, so Utterson goes to visit Lanyon, hoping to learn why Jekyll has refused any company. He finds Lanyon in very poor health, pale and sickly, with a frightened look in his eyes. Lanyon explains that he has had a great shock and expects to die in a few weeks. "[L]ife has been pleasant," he says. "I liked it; yes, sir, I used to like it." Then he adds, "I sometimes think if we knew all, we should be more glad to get away." When Utterson mentions that Jekyll also seems ill, Lanyon violently demands that they talk of anything but Jekyll. He promises that after his death, Utterson may learn the truth about everything, but for now he will not discuss it. Afterward, at home, Utterson writes to Jekyll, talking about being turned away from Jekyll's house and inquiring as to what caused the break between him and Lanyon. Soon Jekyll's written reply arrives, explaining that while he still cares for Lanyon, he understands why the doctor says they must not meet. As for Jekyll himself, he pledges his continued affection for Utterson but adds that from now on he will be maintaining a strict seclusion, seeing no one. He says that he is suffering a punishment that he cannot name.

Lanyon dies a few weeks later, fulfilling his prophecy. After the funeral, Utterson takes from his safe a letter that Lanyon meant for him to read after he died. Inside, Utterson finds only another envelope, marked to remain sealed until Jekyll also has died. Out of professional principle, Utterson overcomes his curiosity and puts the envelope away for safekeeping. As weeks pass, he calls on Jekyll less and less frequently, and the butler continues to refuse him entry.

## **Chapter 7: "Incident at the Window"**

The following Sunday, Utterson and Enfield are taking their regular stroll. Passing the door where Enfield once saw Hyde enter to retrieve Jekyll's check, Enfield remarks on the murder case. He notes that the story that began with the trampling has reached an end, as London will never again see Mr. Hyde. Enfield mentions that in the intervening weeks he has learned that the run-down laboratory they

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pass is physically connected to Jekyll's house, and they both stop to peer into the house's windows, with Utterson noting his concern for Jekyll's health. To their surprise, the two men find Jekyll at the window, enjoying the fresh air. Jekyll complains that he feels "very low," and Utterson suggests that he join them for a walk, to help his circulation. Jekyll refuses, saying that he cannot go out. Then, just as they resume polite conversation, a look of terror seizes his face, and he quickly shuts the window and vanishes. Utterson and Enfield depart in shocked silence.

## **Chapter 8: "The Last Night"**

Jekyll's butler Poole visits Utterson one night after dinner. Deeply agitated, he says only that he believes there has been some "foul play" regarding Dr. Jekyll; he quickly brings Utterson to his master's residence. The night is dark and windy, and the streets are deserted, giving Utterson a premonition of disaster. When he reaches Jekyll's house, he finds the servants gathered fearfully in the main hall. Poole brings Utterson to the door of Jekyll's laboratory and calls inside, saying that Utterson has come for a visit. A strange voice responds, sounding nothing like that of Jekyll; the owner of the voice tells Poole that he can receive no visitors.

Poole and Utterson retreat to the kitchen, where Poole insists that the voice they heard emanating from the laboratory does not belong to his master. Utterson wonders why the murderer would remain in the laboratory if he had just killed Jekyll and not simply flee. Poole describes how the mystery voice has sent him on constant errands to chemists; the man in the laboratory seems desperate for some ingredient that no drugstore in London sells. Utterson, still hopeful, asks whether the notes Poole has received are in the doctor's hand, but Poole then reveals that he has seen the person inside the laboratory, when he came out briefly to search for something, and that the man looked nothing like Jekyll. Utterson suggests that Jekyll may have some disease that changes his voice and deforms his features, making them unrecognizable, but Poole declares that the person he saw was smaller than his master—and looked, in fact, like none other than Mr. Hyde.

Hearing Poole's words, Utterson resolves that he and Poole should break into the laboratory. He sends two servants around the block the laboratory's other door, the one that Enfield sees Hyde using at the beginning of the novel. Then, armed with a fireplace poker and an axe, Utterson and Poole return to the inner door. Utterson calls inside, demanding admittance. The voice begs for Utterson to have mercy and to leave him alone. The lawyer, however, recognizes the voice as Hyde's and orders Poole to smash down the door.

Once inside, the men find Hyde's body lying on the floor, a crushed vial in his hand. He appears to have poisoned himself. Utterson notes that Hyde is wearing a suit that belongs to Jekyll and that is much too large for him. The men search the entire laboratory, as well as the surgeon's theater below and the other rooms in the building, but they find neither a trace of Jekyll nor a corpse. They note a large mirror and think it strange to find such an item in a scientific laboratory. Then, on Jekyll's business table, they find a large envelope addressed to Utterson that contains three items. The first is a will, much like the previous one, except that it replaces Hyde's name with Utterson's. The second is a note to Utterson, with the present day's date on it. Based on this piece of evidence, Utterson surmises that Jekyll is still alive—and he wonders if Hyde really died by suicide or if Jekyll killed him. This note instructs Utterson to go home immediately and read the letter that Lanyon gave him earlier. It adds that if he

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desires to learn more, Utterson can read the confession of “Your worthy and unhappy friend, Henry Jekyll.” Utterson takes the third item from the envelope—a sealed packet—and promises Poole that he will return that night and send for the police. He then heads back to his office to read Lanyon’s letter and the contents of the sealed packet.

## **Chapter 9: “Dr. Lanyon’s Narrative”**

This chapter constitutes a word-for-word transcription of the letter Lanyon intends Utterson to open after Lanyon’s and Jekyll’s deaths. Lanyon writes that after Jekyll’s last dinner party, he received a strange letter from Jekyll. The letter asked Lanyon to go to Jekyll’s home and, with the help of Poole, break into the upper room—or “cabinet”—of Jekyll’s laboratory. The letter instructed Lanyon then to remove a specific drawer and all its contents from the laboratory, return with this drawer to his own home, and wait for a man who would come to claim it precisely at midnight. The letter seemed to Lanyon to have been written in a mood of desperation. It offered no explanation for the orders it gave but promised Lanyon that if he did as it bade, he would soon understand everything.

Lanyon duly went to Jekyll’s home, where Poole and a locksmith met him. The locksmith broke into the lab, and Lanyon returned home with the drawer. Within the drawer, Lanyon found several vials, one containing what seemed to be salt and another holding a peculiar red liquid. The drawer also contained a notebook recording what seemed to be years of experiments, with little notations such as “double” or “total failure!!!” scattered amid a long list of dates. However, the notebooks offered no hints as to what the experiments involved. Lanyon waited for his visitor, increasingly certain that Jekyll must be insane. As promised, at the stroke of midnight, a small, evil-looking man appeared, dressed in clothes much too large for him. It was, of course, Mr. Hyde, but Lanyon, never having seen the man before, did not recognize him. Hyde seemed nervous and excited. He avoided polite conversation, interested only in the contents of the drawer. Lanyon directed him to it, and Hyde then asked for a graduated glass. In it, he mixed the ingredients from the drawer to form a purple liquid, which then became green. Hyde paused and asked Lanyon whether he should leave and take the glass with him, or whether he should stay and drink it in front of Lanyon, allowing the doctor to witness something that he claimed would “stagger the unbelief of Satan.” Lanyon, irritated, declared that he had already become so involved in the matter that he wanted to see the end of it.

Taking up the glass, Hyde told Lanyon that his skepticism of “transcendental medicine” would now be disproved. Before Lanyon’s eyes, the deformed man drank the glass in one gulp and then seemed to swell, his body expanding, his face melting and shifting, until, shockingly, Hyde was gone and Dr. Jekyll stood in his place. Lanyon here ends his letter, stating that what Jekyll told him afterward is too shocking to repeat and that the horror of the event has so wrecked his constitution that he will soon die.

## **Chapter 10: “Henry Jekyll’s Full Statement of the Case”**

This chapter offers a transcription of the letter Jekyll leaves for Utterson in the laboratory. Jekyll writes that upon his birth he possessed a large inheritance, a healthy body, and a hardworking, decent nature. His idealism allowed him to maintain a respectable seriousness in public while hiding his more frivolous and indecent side. By the time he was fully grown, he found himself leading a dual life, in which his better side constantly felt guilt for the transgressions of his darker side. When his scientific interests

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led to mystical studies as to the divided nature of man, he hoped to find some solution to his own split nature. Jekyll insists that “man is not truly one, but truly two,” and he records how he dreamed of separating the good and evil natures.

Jekyll reports that, after much research, he eventually found a chemical solution that might serve his purposes. Buying a large quantity of salt as his last ingredient, he took the potion with the knowledge that he was risking his life, but he remained driven by the hopes of making a great discovery. At first, he experienced incredible pain and nausea. But as these symptoms subsided, he felt vigorous and filled with recklessness and sensuality. He had become the shrunken, deformed Mr. Hyde. He hypothesizes that Hyde’s small stature owed to the fact that this persona represented his evil side alone, which up to that point had been repressed.

Upon first looking into a mirror after the transformation, Jekyll-turned-Hyde was not repulsed by his new form; instead, he experienced “a leap of welcome.” He came to delight in living as Hyde. Jekyll was becoming too old to act upon his more embarrassing impulses, but Hyde was a younger man, the personification of the evil side that emerged several years after Jekyll’s own birth. Transforming himself into Hyde became a welcome outlet for Jekyll’s passions. Jekyll furnished a home and set up a bank account for his alter ego, Hyde, who soon sunk into utter degradation. But each time he transformed back into Jekyll, he felt no guilt at Hyde’s dark exploits, though he did try to right whatever wrongs had been done.

It was not until two months before the Carew murder that Jekyll found cause for concern. While asleep one night, he involuntarily transformed into Hyde—without the help of the potion—and awoke in the body of his darker half. This incident convinced him that he must cease with his transformations or risk being trapped in Hyde’s form forever. But after two months as Jekyll, he caved in and took the potion again. Hyde, so long repressed, emerged wild and vengefully savage, and it was in this mood that he beat Carew to death, delighting in the crime. Hyde showed no remorse for the murder, but Jekyll knelt and prayed to God for forgiveness even before his transformation back was complete. The horrifying nature of the murder convinced Jekyll never to transform himself again, and it was during the subsequent months that Utterson and others remarked that Jekyll seemed to have had a weight lifted from his shoulders, and that everything seemed well with him.

Eventually, though, Jekyll grew weary of constant virtue and indulged some of his darker desires—in his own person, not that of Hyde. But this dip into darkness proved sufficient to cause another spontaneous transformation into Hyde, which took place one day when Jekyll was sitting in a park, far from home. As Hyde, he immediately felt brave and powerful, but he also knew that the police would seize him for his murder of Carew. He could not even return to his rooms to get his potions without a great risk of being captured. It was then that he sent word to Lanyon to break into his laboratory and get his potions for him. After that night, he had to take a double dose of the potion every six hours to avoid spontaneous transformation into Hyde. As soon as the drug began to wear off, the transformation process would begin. It was one of these spells that struck him as he spoke to Enfield and Utterson out the window, forcing him to withdraw.

In his last, desperate hours, Hyde grew stronger as Jekyll grew weaker. Moreover, the salt necessary for the potion began to run out. Jekyll ordered more, only to discover that the mineral did not have the same effect; he realized that the original salt must have contained an impurity that made the

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potion work. Jekyll then anticipated the fast approach of the moment when he must become Hyde permanently. He thus used the last of the potion to buy himself time during which to compose this final letter. Jekyll writes that he does not know whether, when faced with discovery, Hyde will kill himself or be arrested and hanged—but he knows that by the time Utterson reads this letter, Henry Jekyll will be no more.