

Dr Jekyll & Mr Hyde: Hyde

Overview

"Pure evil"

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.

Should Hyde actually have a sheet to himself? Is he a character in his own right?

Really he is just a symbol of the evil in everyone.

Remember Hyde is pure evil; Jekyll is the same old mixture of good and evil (otherwise he would never be tempted to transform into Hyde.)

We could say he is not a person in his own right as he is the evil side of Jekyll's personality. Jekyll only creates a name and separate legal identity for Hyde to conceal the fact that Hyde is Jekyll. However, we can argue that he is a character in the novel because until we read Lanyon's letter in Chapter 9 the reader accepts him as an individual.

Once Jekyll releases his evil side, the evil gradually comes to dominate the good.

At first Hyde's evil acts a merely **"undignified"** pleasures; they soon turn **"monstrous."**

Hyde gets stronger. Then Jekyll loses control: he goes to bed as Jekyll and then awakes as Mr. Hyde. From then on Hyde dominates. Jekyll decides to stop taking the potion but then gives in only for Hyde to come out stronger and more evil. Hyde murders Carew and only Hyde's fear of death causes him to resume the identity of Jekyll. It is in the identity of Hyde that "Jekyll's" body is found by Poole and Utterson. Primitive and un-evolved

Hyde is described as: "ape-like", "troglodytic", suggesting that evil is a part of man's primitive past. However, Stevenson suggests that this primitive and undeveloped part of human nature is still a part of our make-up. It's this realisation, which shocks and kills Lanyon. *"I sometimes think if we knew all, we should be more glad to get away."*

"All" means the whole truth about human nature, including the evil that is in all of us.



Duality

Hyde is pure evil therefore there is no duality to him.

for the man trampled calmly over the, child's body and left her screaming on the ground. It sounds nothing to hear, but it was hellish to see. It wasn't like a man; it was like some damned Juggernaut.[Ch 1]

Evil has no morality. Evil has no sense of right or wrong. The adverb **"calmly"** suggests Hyde does not even identify violently **"trampling"** a child as wrong.

The effect of pure evil on others

I saw that Sawbones turn sick and white with the desire to kill him. I knew what was in his mind, just as he knew what was in mine:[Ch 1]

an impression of deformity without any nameable malformation [Ch 2]

not all of these together could explain the hitherto unknown disgust, loathing, and fear with which Mr. Utterson regarded him [Ch 2]

none could come near to me at first without a visible misgiving of the flesh[Ch 10]

Because Hyde is unique in being pure evil they find him almost impossible to describe. Because he embodies the concept of pure evil, characters can only describe him in abstract terms, they can only describe the emotional effect he has on them.

However, he is the product of Jekyll's duality. Jekyll's need to be respected and to protect his reputation but still be able to enjoy unsuppressed guilt-free pleasures.



Secrecy

Hyde represents the secret part of every respectable man's personality, the part that they wish to keep hidden in order to protect their reputation.

He represents Jekyll's evil side It is Jekyll's desire to keep his **"undignified"** pleasures secret by creating a separate identity. But Jekyll's real evil is that he creates Hyde so he can have guilt-free pleasure.



Friendship

Hyde has no friends but Jekyll pretends that Hyde is a friend.

But Jekyll's friendship with his oldest and most loyal friends (Lanyon and Utterson) is put under pressure by the release of Hyde.

Lanyon is so shocked by the realisation that Jekyll is Hyde that it kills him.

Utterson's friendship?

Utterson seeks to protect his friend from Hyde: symbolically he is trying to protect Jekyll from his own evil side.



Reputation

It appears that even Hyde recognises the importance of maintaining his reputation as a gentleman

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

The only other thing that has any control over Hyde is fear. Hyde is a coward. Hyde fears execution for the murder of Sir Danvers Carew. Stevenson includes Hyde's murder of Carew as a plot device that gives a reason for Hyde to transform back into Jekyll. He uses Jekyll as a kind of hiding place.



Repression

Hyde does not repress any of his desires. But he is "created" by Jekyll's desire to free himself from repression.

The only thing that limits Hyde's capacity for evil is **"fear of the gallows"** following the murder of Danvers Carewe.