

Utterson, a lawyer and a friend of Dr Jekyll, has come to his house and found the dead body of Mr Hyde, a violent and dangerous character known for murdering a man named Carew. Jekyll is nowhere to be seen and has left a letter. In this letter, he tells Utterson that everything will be explained in the confession of another Doctor, Dr Lanyon, which he encloses in the envelope.

DR. LANYON'S NARRATIVE

ON the ninth of January, now four days ago, I received by the evening delivery¹ a registered envelope, addressed in the hand of my colleague and old school-companion, Henry Jekyll. I was a good deal surprised by this; for we were by no means in the habit of correspondence; I had seen the man, dined with him, indeed, the night before; and I could imagine nothing in our intercourse that should justify formality of registration. The contents increased my wonder²; for this is how the letter ran:

"10th December, 18--

"DEAR LANYON, You are one of my oldest friends; and although we may have differed at times on scientific questions, I cannot remember, at least on my side, any break in our affection.[...]Lanyon, my life, my honour my reason, are all at your mercy³; if you fail me to-night I am lost. [...]

"I want you to [...] drive straight to my house. Poole, my butler⁴, has his orders; you will find him waiting your arrival with a locksmith. The door of my cabinet is then to be forced: and you are to go in alone; to open the glazed press (letter E) on the left hand[...]; and to draw out, with all its contents as they stand, the fourth drawer⁵ from the top or (which is the same thing) the third drawer from the bottom [...], you may know the right drawer by its contents: some powders, a phial and a paper book. This drawer I beg of you to carry back with you to Cavendish Square exactly as it stands.

"That is the first part of the service: now for the second.[...]At midnight [...], I have to ask you to be alone in your consulting-room, to admit with your own hand into the house a man who will present himself in my name, and to place in his hands the drawer that you will have brought with you from my cabinet.

Then you will have played your part and earned my gratitude completely.

Serve me, my dear Lanyon, and save

Your friend,
H. J."

[...]Upon the reading of this letter, I made sure my colleague was insane; but till that was proved beyond the possibility of doubt, I felt bound to do as he requested.[...] I rose accordingly from table, got into a hansom⁶, and drove

straight to Jekyll's house. The butler was awaiting my arrival; he had received by the same post as mine a registered letter of instruction, and had sent at once for a locksmith⁷ and a carpenter [...] and after two hours' work, the door stood open. The press marked E was unlocked; and I took out the drawer, had it filled up with straw and tied in a sheet⁸, and returned with it to Cavendish Square.

Here I proceeded to examine its contents. The powders were neatly enough made up, but not with the nicety of the dispensing chemist; so that it was plain⁹ they were of Jekyll's private manufacture; and when I opened one of the wrappers¹⁰ I found what seemed to me a simple crystalline salt of a white colour. The phial, to which I next turned my attention, might have been about half-full of a blood-red liquor, which was highly pungent¹¹ to the sense of smell and seemed to me to contain phosphorus and some volatile ether. At the other ingredients I could make no guess.

The book was an ordinary version-book and contained little but a series of dates. These covered a period of many years, but I observed that the entries ceased nearly a year ago and quite abruptly. Here and there a brief remark was appended to a date, usually no more than a single word: "double" occurring perhaps six times in a total of several hundred entries; and once very early in the list and followed by several marks of exclamation, "total failure!!!"

All this, though it whetted my curiosity, told me little that was definite. Here were a phial of some tincture, a paper of some salt, and the record of a series of experiments that had led (like too many of Jekyll's investigations) to no end of practical usefulness¹².

How could the presence of these articles in my house affect either the honour, the sanity, or the life of my flighty colleague? If his messenger could go to one place, why could he not go to another? And [...] why was this gentleman to be received by me in secret?

The more I reflected the more convinced I grew that I was dealing with a case of cerebral disease: and though I dismissed my servants to bed, I loaded an old revolver, that I might be found in some posture of self-defence.

¹ Post office

² curiosity

³ In your hands

⁴ A servant

⁵ tiroir

⁶ A carriage

⁷ serrurier

⁸ Un linge / un drap

⁹ obvious

¹⁰ The papers that wrap the powders

¹¹ entêtant

¹² No useful result

Twelve o'clock had scarce rung out over London, ere¹³ the knocker sounded very gently on the door. I went myself at the summons, and found a small man crouching against the pillars of the portico.

"Are you come from Dr. Jekyll?" I asked.

He told me "yes" by a constrained gesture; and when I had bidden him enter, he did not obey me without a searching backward glance¹⁴ into the darkness of the square. There was a policeman not far off [...] and at the sight, I thought my visitor started and made greater haste.

These particulars struck me, I confess, disagreeably; and as I followed him into the bright light of the consulting-room, I kept my hand ready on my weapon.

Here, at last, I had a chance of clearly seeing him. I had never set eyes on him before, so much was certain. He was small, as I have said; I was struck besides with the shocking expression of his face, with his remarkable combination of great muscular activity and great apparent debility¹⁵ of constitution[...].

This person [...] was dressed in a fashion that would have made an ordinary person laughable; his clothes, [...] although they were of rich and sober fabric, were enormously too large for him in every measurement -- the trousers hanging on his legs and rolled up to keep them from the ground, the waist of the coat below his haunches, and the collar sprawling wide upon his shoulders.

Strange to relate, this ludicrous¹⁶ accoutrement was far from moving me to laughter[...].

"Have you got it?" he cried. "Have you got it?" And so lively was his impatience that he even laid his hand upon my arm and sought to shake me.

I put him back, conscious at his touch of a certain icy pang along my blood. "Come, sir¹⁷," said I. "You forget that I have not yet the pleasure of your acquaintance. Be seated, if you please." [...]

"I beg your pardon, Dr. Lanyon," he replied civilly enough. "What you say is very well founded; and my impatience has shown its heels to my politeness. I come here at the instance¹⁸ of your colleague, Dr. Henry Jekyll, on a piece of business of some moment; and I understood..."

He paused and put his hand to his throat, and I could see, in spite of his collected manner, that he was wrestling against the approaches of the hysteria --

"I understood, a drawer..."

But here I took pity on my visitor's suspense, and some perhaps on my own growing curiosity.

"There it is, sir," said I, pointing to the drawer[...]

He sprang to it, and then paused, and laid his hand upon his heart: I could hear his teeth grate with the convulsive action of his jaws; and his face was so ghastly to see that I grew alarmed both for his life and reason.

"Compose yourself," said I.

He turned a dreadful smile to me, and as if with the decision of despair, plucked away the sheet. At sight of the contents, he uttered one loud sob¹⁹ of such immense relief that I sat petrified. And the next moment, in a voice that was already fairly well under control, "Have you a graduated glass?" he asked.

I rose from my place with something of an effort and gave him what he asked. He thanked me with a smiling nod, measured out a few minims of the red tincture and added one of the powders. The mixture, which was at first of a reddish hue, began, in proportion as the crystals melted, to brighten in colour, to effervesce audibly, and to throw off small fumes of vapour. Suddenly and at the same moment, the ebullition ceased and the compound changed to a dark purple, which faded again more slowly to a watery green. My visitor, who had watched these metamorphoses with a keen²⁰ eye, smiled, set down the glass upon the table, and then turned and looked upon me with an air of scrutiny.

"And now," said he, "to settle what remains. Will you be wise? Will you be guided? Will you suffer me to take this glass in my hand and to go forth from your house without further parley²¹? Or has the greed of curiosity too much command of you?"

Think before you answer, for it shall be done as you decide.

As you decide, you shall be left as you were before, and neither richer nor wiser, [...]. Or, if you shall so prefer to choose, a new province of knowledge and new avenues to fame and power shall be laid open to you, here, in this room, upon the instant; and your sight shall be blasted by a prodigy to stagger²² the unbelief of Satan."

"Sir," said I, affecting a coolness that I was far from truly possessing, "you speak enigmas[...]. But I have gone too far in the way of inexplicable services to pause before I see the end."

"It is well," replied my visitor. "Lanyon, you remember your vows: what follows is under the seal²³ of our profession. And now, you who have so long been bound to the most narrow and material views, you who have denied the virtue of transcendental medicine,[...]-- behold²⁴!"

¹³ before

¹⁴ Quick look

¹⁵ weakness

¹⁶ ridiculous

¹⁷ « voyons, monsieur ! »

¹⁸ In the name of...

¹⁹ Un sanglot

²⁰ attentive

²¹ Without more discussion

²² A faire chanceler

²³ secret

²⁴ Look !

He put the glass to his lips and drank at one gulp. A cry followed; he reeled, staggered, clutched²⁵ at the table and held on, staring with injected eyes, gasping with open mouth; and as I looked there came, I thought, a change -- he seemed to swell²⁶ -- his face became suddenly black and the features seemed to melt and alter -- and the next moment, I had sprung to my feet and leaped²⁷ back against the wall, my arm raised to shield me from that prodigy, my mind submerged in terror.

"O God!" I screamed, and "O God!" again and again; for there before my eyes -- pale and shaken²⁸, and half-fainting, and groping²⁹ before him with his hands, like a man restored from death -- there stood Henry Jekyll!

What he told me in the next hour, I cannot bring my mind to set on paper. I saw what I saw, I heard what I heard, and my soul sickened at it; and yet now when that sight has faded³⁰ from my eyes, I ask myself if I believe it, and I cannot answer.

My life is shaken to its roots; sleep has left me; the deadliest terror sits by me at all hours of the day and night; I feel that my days are numbered, and that I must die; and yet I shall die incredulous. 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.

HASTIE LANYON.

Read the full story at :

<http://soft.rosinstrument.com/lib/Literature/english/1800-1899/stevenson-strange-553.txt?fp=4>

²⁵ s'agrippa

²⁶ To become bigger

²⁷ jumped

²⁸ ébranlé

²⁹ Tatonnant

³⁰ Disappeared

READER'S GUIDE

Where does the scene take place? Who are the main characters? What is their job?

Page 1: Describe Jekyll's **feelings** and Lanyon's **reaction** to his letter. What is Lanyon's **attitude** in general? Do you think he is a good doctor?

What do you learn about Jekyll's activities?

Page 2: Describe the visitor's **appearance** and his **attitude**. What do you think of him? What is Lanyon's attitude towards his visitor? What is Hyde's job in your opinion? (justify)

Can we say that Lanyon is a hypocrite? Why?

Page 3: What happens in the last lines of the Doctor's confession? What are his **feelings** when he sees this? Why does he feel like this?

What are his **feelings** in the last three paragraphs? Why?

Going further

What do you think is going to be Utterson's reaction to this confession? What would be your reaction?