

Dr Henry Jekyll



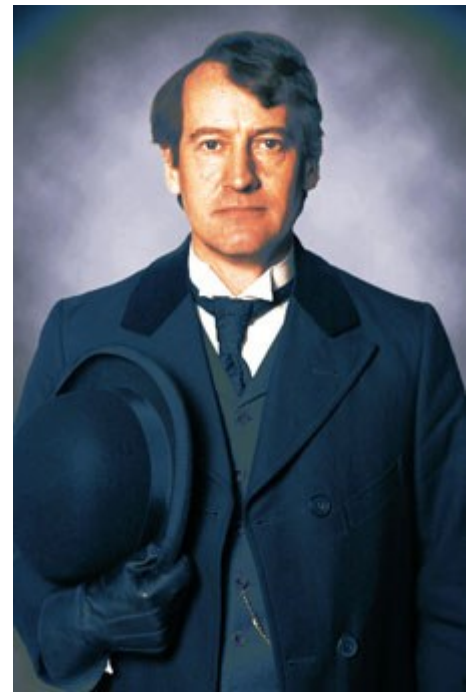
- Jekyll is a doctor and experimental scientist.
- He is wealthy and respectable.
- He has been a sociable person in the past, with a circle of friends including the lawyer, Utterson, and another doctor, Lanyon.
- During the course of the novel his behaviour becomes increasingly erratic.
- His will states that if he disappears he leaves everything to Hyde. His oldest friend, Utterson, knows nothing of Hyde and urges Jekyll to change his will. He fears Hyde has a mysterious, perhaps criminal, hold over Jekyll, and that Hyde might murder him to benefit from the will.
- In the last chapter we learn that Jekyll has been carrying out experiments to separate his personality (the 'evil' part embodied in Hyde) from his higher nature. Hyde eventually becomes more powerful and takes over.

Mr Edward Hyde



- He is described as small ('dwarfish') and young.
- People react with horror and fear when they see him. But there is no single thing about him that is especially unpleasant; it is as if his spirit affects people.
- He is violent, and has no sense of guilt about his crimes. In Chapter 1, Hyde assaults a young girl, and in Chapter 4 he beats an elderly gentleman to death. He has no motive for either of these attacks.
- His appearances in the novel are always brief. People only catch impressions of him, before he vanishes into the dark or behind a door.
- Hyde is very secretive.

Gabriel Utterson



- Utterson is an old friend of Jekyll, and his lawyer.
- He is calm and rational, just as lawyers are supposed to be. Rather like a scientist, his approach in life is to weigh up the evidence.
- Utterson is 'a lover of the sane and customary sides of life'. Stevenson probably uses him to represent the attitudes of the average reader of his time.
- His sense of shock and horror when he first meets Hyde is, by contrast to his normal reaction to things, irrational: 'not all these points together could explain the hitherto unknown disgust, loathing and fear with which Mr Utterson regarded him.'
- He spends much of the novel trying to advise and help Jekyll, giving advice about his will and avoiding Hyde, and trying to help him when he shuts himself in his room. Jekyll recognises that he is a good friend, but rejects all his offers of help.
- At no stage does he suspect Jekyll and Hyde are the same person. However, he makes observations whereby the reader can, looking back, see the evidence. For instance, he asks his chief clerk, Mr Guest, to look at Hyde's handwriting. When Guest sees that Hyde's and Jekyll's writing is strangely similar, though with different directions of slope, Utterson draws the wrong conclusion: that Jekyll has forged Hyde's handwriting to protect him.
- In Chapter 8, Utterson goes home to read the documents found in Jekyll's laboratory and promises Jekyll's servant he will return before midnight. The novel ends with two chapters containing the two documents he goes home to read. The reader never discovers Utterson's reaction to them, or what action he takes. He is left as an uncompleted character. This is perhaps Stevenson's way of showing that sensible, rational people do not always have all the answers.