

## THE ELEMENTS OF MYSTERY AND SUSPENSE IN THE STRANGE CASE OF DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE

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### ABSTRACT

**Robert Louis Stevenson, a Scottish writer of novels**, best known for his famous children's adventure stories *Treasure Island* and *Kidnapped*. Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is a lesson in suspense. Stevenson creates one singular point of mystery that successfully sustains reader intrigue and anxiety across nine tightly written chapters. Stevenson uses many methods to achieve suspense, mystery and horror in the first two chapters of *Dr Jekyll & Mr Hyde*. He does this by using a clever sense of setting, vocabulary, surroundings and the manner his characters are described. Some of these are highlighted in the depiction of the house; Enfield's story; Henry Jekyll will and the meeting with Hyde. He makes it look like that Jekyll and Hyde are two different people and when the reader sees this he knows they are the same person and when Utterson looks at the case it makes it look like he does not know anything about the fact that they are the same person. Suspense that derives from character is an effective technique to employ in mystery writing. The main frame of the work can then shift from the provision of bread crumbs and diversions to a more engaging structure that allows the characters freedom to move within the narrative. We want to see Jekyll. We wish Lanyon hadn't died. We trust Utterson. What the characters actually do becomes suspenseful. And that is the essence of mystery.

**KEY WORDS: MYSTERY, SUSPENSE, HORROR ETC.**

### INTRODUCTION

The story of 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' is full of mystery. The elements of mystery have made the story interesting. The story is mainly concerned with a moral problem. But the real interest lies in the mystery of the relationship between Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. This mystery has made the novel very popular among the readers. Stevenson has been successful writer in creating mysterious atmosphere in the novel. He has made the readers guess all the time.

The mystery starts with the first chapter. Mr. Utterson and Mr. Enfield during one of their Sunday walks come upon a door in the bystreet. The author has created mystery about the door. Mr. Enfield narrates the story of Mr. Hyde. The narration is full of mystery, but the real mystery consists in the

description of the character of Mr. Hyde who is ugly in mind and body. Mr. Hyde is known for his wickedness. Stevenson has also created lots of mystery when Mr. Hyde produces a cheque signed by Dr. Jekyll. In the first chapter we come to know that Mr. Hyde is connected with respectable and honorable Dr. Jekyll. This hint from the first chapter is full of mystery which motivates Mr. Utterson to investigate more into the life of Mr. Hyde. The simplicity of the central question - excuse me, Mr. Hyde, who exactly *are* you? - is highly effective. The entirety of Stevenson's narrative stems from this predicament. The suspense comes from an absence of knowledge. We, the reader, know nothing. Sure, Enfield tells a fairly bone-chilling story about a monster who stomps on a little girl at 3:00 am, but Hyde remains an enigma. Stevenson plays on natural human curiosity by piquing interest with a perturbing opening tale, then rests, and uses Utterson's ignorance as a buffer to withhold information.

We also find mystery in Dr. Jekyll's will. The clauses of will are wrapped in mystery as they appear very strange. Mr. Utterson can't make out the motive of a clever man like Dr. Jekyll in preparing such a will. Mr. Utterson smells some sort of blackmailing. He is not able to understand what can make Dr. Jekyll draw a will in favor of Mr. Hyde. Mr Utterson's search of Mr. Hyde is full of mystery. Their meeting adds to the mystery. The appearance and nature of Mr. Hyde is full of mystery. The mystery deepens when Dr. Jekyll tells Mr. Utterson that his position is very strange one. When he tells Mr. Utterson that he has a very great interest in Mr. Hyde, the mystery becomes very deep. The mystery surrounds Dr. Jekyll's statement that he can rid himself of Mr. Hyde at any time he chooses. Here we see that the whole situation is full of mystery and Dr. Jekyll's conduct is wrapped in mystery.

The real mystery is revealed in the murder of Sir Danvers Carew by Mr. Hyde. The maid - servant's description of Mr. Hyde's brutal act is full of mystery. The mystery becomes intense when Mr. Utterson recognizes the stick as one described by him to Dr. Jekyll. The mystery deepens when Jekyll hands over a letter supposedly written by Hyde to Mr. Utterson. This letter adds to the mystery. Mr. Utterson consults his head clerk, Mr. Guest, showing him the letter and a note of invitation by Dr. Jekyll. Mr. Guest after comparing the handwriting gives opinion that both the hands were identical in all respects though differently sloped intentionally. We find here that the mystery is at its climax. Then he follows the renewal of life of Dr. Jekyll. When Mr. Utterson goes to see Dr. Jekyll, he is denied to admit. Here the mystery of situation arises. Then comes the death of Dr. Lanyon. Dr. Lanyon is shocked so as to be at the point of dying. Finally, he meets his tragic death. The death of Dr. Lanyon creates a lot of mystery in the novel. *What is the cause of Dr. Lanyon's fatal shock? Why does he not reveal it to Mr. Utterson?*

The mystery is at its highest when Jekyll shuts himself in his study. Somebody is lurking and crying there, behaving like a strange creature and never comes out. Poole and other servants get baffled and horrified. Poole tells Utterson that Dr. Jekyll is murdered and that the killer is lurking in his study. But the mystery becomes more complex when the notes addressed to the druggists and chemists of London are found to be written in the hand of Dr. Jekyll. This proves that the doctor is not dead. Thus, the happenings of the chapter "The Last Night" are full of mystery. Then the study door is broken. But Dr. Jekyll is not there. The back door is still locked. How can Dr. Jekyll flee away from the room? In the doctor's room,

there lies the dead body of Mr. Hyde who had killed himself. No sign of Dr. Jekyll's body is found anywhere in the room. There is a note for Mr. Utterson bearing that day's date.

Two narratives that follow finally solve all the mystery. Thus, Stevenson has created mystery of situations as well as of characters. He has created an atmosphere that adds to that mystery.

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