

The Nineteenth Century Novel
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Lecture – 46
The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, Chapter 4

Hello and welcome to week 10's lectures, today we will be looking at chapter 4 of R. L. Stevenson's The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Hr. Hyde, and in this chapter, we will see another crime, a serious crime being committed by Edward Hyde. So in the beginning of the novella we were introduced to monstrous activity of Edward Hyde, and that act is repeated in a more horrible manner in this particular chapter with regard to another human being.

So, let us see what is the nature of the crime, and what are the narrative and thematic implications of this crime of Edward Hyde.

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Ch-4 The Carew Murder Case

- The old gentleman took a step back, with the air of one very much surprised and a trifle hurried; and at that Mr. Hyde broke out of all bounds and clubbed him to the earth. And next moment, with ape-like fury, he was trampling his victim under foot and hailing down a storm of blows, under which the bones audibly shattered and the body jumped upon the roadway. At the horror of these sights and sounds, the maid fainted.

graphical picture of a horrific crime

This chapter is entitled the Carew Murder Case. So the title is a giveaway, the title gives away the fact that there is a murder that had been committed and it has become a case for police investigation. In the first chapter, we saw that there was no police investigation because there is no death or serious injury for the little girl, she is just crushed, but she escapes with her life and then she is paid about 100 pounds by Edward Hyde as a compensation.

So that is personally sorted, it is sorted among the people who were witnessing the crime on the spot and now, the police is brought in. So let us see how this crime happens. And this crime is

kind of seen through the eyes of a maid, a young woman who is at the window one particular night, and she is enjoying the, you know, the scene, the romantic scene of the night. And as she is looking out of the window, she sees an old gentleman walking down the street.

And on the other side, we have another figure, and there is no surprise as to who that figure is, and that is Edward Hyde. And the gentleman kind of greets the man Edward Hyde, and he is attacked. The old gentleman took a step back because his greeting is not welcomed, it is quite the contrary. So the gentleman “took a step back, with an air of one very much surprised and a trifle hurt; and at that Mr. Hyde broke out of all bounds and clubbed him to the earth. And the next moment, with ape-like fury, he was trampling his victim under foot and hailing down a storm of blows, under which the bones audibly shattered and the body jumped upon the roadway. At the horror of these sights and sounds, the maid fainted.”

So this is a very graphic picture of a horrible crime. The choice of words are vivid and visceral and they bring to light the specific, you know, actions and movements of the people involved in the scene. And look at the way this is a very carefully narrated, you know, slowly narrated from the gentleman taking a step back, you know, the physical expressions on his face, he looked surprised, the old gentleman is surprised and he is hurt as well, a trifle hurt. In fact this hurt refers to the offense he takes, he is offended by the behaviour of you know, Hyde, and Mr. Hyde on seeing the offended, you know, features of the old man, he just broke out of all bounds, he is, you know, behaving in such an uncivilized manner here.

There is no you know, boundary to the activities. This man is you know, letting loose upon this old gentleman, and he clubbed him to the earth. Look at the word here which captures the intensity and the gory, you know, aspect of the crime. He is just clubbing an old man to death as somebody would, you know, strike at an animal, and the next moment with ape-like fury, he was trampling his victim underfoot.

So, he just repeats the crime, the way in which he committed the crime in the first scene of the novella, where he crushes the child, and he is trampling his victim here. So it is a very barbaric act that we are witnessing here, and he is hailing down a storm of blows, he does not stop the horrible acts of violence that he is inflicting on this old man. It is a storm of blows, clubbing, so and we can hear the bones shattering as he is inflicting so much violence on the body.

So, the bones audibly shattered and the body jumped up. So look at the automatic way the body kind of moves under the blows of the man, this horrible monster of a man, and at the horror, we have a witness to the scene who is horrified by the sights and sounds that she is able to, you know, see and hear and she faints. And that is the impact of the violence on this woman who is witnessing the scene from her window.

So we do get a horrible, you know, a picture here of the monstrous activities that this man is capable of. And what is the result of such violence?


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The Stick

*Gift to
Dr Jekyll
by Mr Utterson*

- Mr Utterson had already quailed at the name of Hyde; but when the stick was laid before him, he could doubt no longer; broken and battered as it was, he recognized it for one that he had himself presented many years before to Henry Jekyll.

*Mr Utterson = Enfield = crime of Hyde
Mr Utterson = holder of consent = "*



And the result is that the police are called in, and in fact the old gentleman who is killed in such a monstrous fashion is an MP, and so this is making a lot of news across the society, there is a lot of hue and cry about the violent manner in which he was attacked and you know, there is a letter which is found on the body of Sir Carew, and that letter is a letter to his lawyer, and the lawyer is Mr. Utterson.

So, we can see how Mr. Utterson is again being linked to the crime that Hyde had committed. So if you look at the previous crime, we have Enfield who you know, talks about the crime of Hyde to Mr. Utterson, and we have here the letter of Carew on his person which is connecting Mr. Utterson to this crime. And that is why the police called Mr. Utterson in and he offers, you know, whatever information he has in his possession about Mr. Hyde.

And Mr. Utterson also accompanies him to the house of Mr. Hyde and they search his premises. And even before that search is undertaken, there is a, you know, a broken part of a stick, and

that stick is a gift that Mr. Utterson gave to Dr. Jekyll, by Utterson. So, Mr. Utterson “had already quailed at the name of Hyde; but when the stick was laid before him, he could doubt no longer; broken and battered as it was, he recognized it for one that he had himself presented many years before to Henry Jekyll.”

So, you know, everybody knows that it is Hyde who had committed this crime, but the last nail on the coffin for Mr. Utterson is the fact that there is this remaining part of the stick, and he recognizes that stick to be one that he himself had gifted to Dr. Jekyll earlier on, you know, as many years ago. And look at the way the gift is transferred, at least that is how Mr. Utterson sees it; his, you know, gift which indicates their friendship is being passed on by Dr. Jekyll to somebody else.


So, the friendship has kind of shifted to two different people here, and Mr. Utterson is horrified to know that there is a kind of an association between Dr. Jekyll and Hyde, and the stick is the one that is connecting both of these men to the crime.

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Soho

- The dismal quarter of Soho seen under these changing glimpses, with its muddy ways, and slatternly passengers and its lamps, which had never been extinguished or had been kindled afresh to combat this mournful reinvasion of darkness, seemed, in the lawyer's eyes, like a district of some city in a nightmare.

Handwritten notes:
- "changing glimpses" circled in red.
- "lamps" circled in red, with "lamps" and "are" written next to it.
- "to combat" circled in red, with "fight against" written next to it.
- "darkness" circled in red.
- "nightmare" circled in red, with "nightmarish ambience" written below it.
- "Reminds us of Dickens' language" written in red.



As I said, Mr. Utterson is bringing the police to the premises of Mr. Hyde. So Mr. Hyde also has a separate house in Soho, and it is to this place that the police arrive. And what kind of an environment do we see in Soho? It is a dismal quarter “seen under these changing glimpses, with its muddy ways, and slatternly passengers and its lamps, which had never been extinguished or had been kindled afresh to combat this mournful reinvasion of darkness, seemed, in the lawyer’s eyes, like a district of some city in a nightmare.”

It is a fantastic paragraph that talks about the street in a metaphoric manner too, and this is reminiscent of Dickens' language. So this is a dismal quarter, it is a very, you know, dark, damp, unattractive section of Soho, and if there is a dismal quarter, then there should also be a bright quarter too. And this dismal quarter has its muddy pathways, it has its share of slatternly passengers, passengers who are slouching, who are you know careless, who are reckless and who look somehow degraded in some way.

And its lamps which had never been extinguished are had been kindled afresh. The lamps are neglected, that is what it means in this section, lamps are neglected. And since they are neglected, and the lamps and its brightness are unable to combat fight against this mournful reinvasion of darkness. So darkness is again invading this neighbourhood, and all this seemed to the lawyer's eyes like the city of some kind of nightmare, in a nightmare.

So, it looked like a district of some city in a, it is a nightmarish ambience that we have. And this quality is significant because this quality is similar to the quality of the neighbourhood that he saw in his feverish imagination. So if you remember the earlier sessions, we saw that Mr. Utterson is dreaming of Mr. Hyde, and it is a nightmare in which the spirit of Mr. Hyde is kind of travelling across, it is kind of moving across, haunting the city in a ghostly manner.

And that foreshadowing is somehow kind of come into fruition, it is kind of happening in reality. So the dream is coming true, so that seems to be one of the metaphoric, you know, messages of this particular scene in the novel. And look at the changing glimpses, and the scene is constantly changing, the scene in this dismal quarter is changing, and that is also indicative of the shifting moods of the people, of the, you know, the structures here.

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Hyde's servant

- An ^{smooth} ivory-faced and ^{gray-haired} silvery-haired old woman opened the door. She had an evil face, smoothed by hypocrisy; but her manners were excellent.
- A flash of odious joy appeared upon the woman's face. "Ah! said she, "he is in trouble! What has he done?"

So when they go and knock at the door of Mr. Hyde, we are introduced to Hyde's servant. "An ivory faced and silver haired, silvery haired old woman opened the door. She had an evil face smoothed by hypocrisy; but her manners were excellent." And look at the way the servant is described here, so the servant is befitting, you know, the character of Hyde's servant inside is evil, it is also natural that the servant would also be evil.

And she is ivory faced, smooth faced, ivory is smooth, isn't it. So we can also interpret it to mean smooth faced, and she is silver haired, grey haired, and she has an evil face which is smoothed by hypocrisy. So we are quite right in suggesting that she has a smooth face, and that smoothness is also metaphorical because she is hypocritical, she is not a woman with genuine feelings. but her manners were excellent.

So, she is being very clever. Is she being sly? Can we suggest that? So, look at the list of attributes that the servant woman possesses. She is hypocritical, she is evil, she is sly, but her manners are excellent, she is very polite and "a flash of odious joy appeared upon the woman's face", she is happy, ecstatic to see the man because she can easily tell that they are from the police. And she said, "Ah!", said she, 'he is in trouble! What has he done?'"

So, you know, she seems to enjoy the evil that Hyde perpetrates in society, and she is gleefully asking what has he done, what crime has he committed. So I am interested in the description of the woman because her attributes remind us of so many other characters in the novel, not the least Dr. Jekyll. Because if you remember the description of Dr. Jekyll, he is very smooth faced and his manners are excellent and he has a slyish cast.

So, she evokes a lot of other characters who possess similar attributes, and that is very interesting. And she is one of the very few female characters that we have in this novella. We have the girl child who is attacked by Hyde at the beginning and then we have this servant as one of the female characters, and then we have references to maids, the maid who witnessed the crime of Sir Danvers Carew, and then we have a maid who is in the employment of Dr. Jekyll and who is kind of shushed very harshly by Poole, the steward, at the end of the story.

So we have either very weak female characters who faint at the sight of crime, or who are the victims of crime, or we have evil minded female characters, who enjoy the evil nature of their master. So look at the, you know, the representations of womanhood in this particular novella. It is very, very dysfunctional, it is kind of askew in this novella.

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Hyde

- ...his family could nowhere be traced; he had never been photographed; and the few who could describe him differed widely, as common observers will. Only on one point, were they agreed and that was the haunting sense of unexpressed deformity with which the fugitive impressed his beholders.

No family connections

No consensus about his appearance

Can't explain / describe mysterious



Now, everybody is looking for Hyde. Where can we find Hyde? The police are on the lookout for Hyde, and they cannot possibly share images of his, you know, person because nobody knows how exactly, what exactly he looks like, you know. Everybody has seen him, but nobody can describe him accurately to come up with a portrait that could be sent around so that everybody can be, you know, on the lookout for this criminal, but it is an attempt that fails.

His family could nowhere be traced, Mr. Hyde does not have any family, “he had never been photographed; and the few who could describe him differed widely, as common observers will. Only in one point were they agreed, and that was the haunting sense of unexpressed deformity

with which the fugitive impressed his beholders.” So he has no family, so one cannot trace his lineage, his connections, and that in itself is very interesting, no family connections.

And those who have met him described in such contrary fashion that it is difficult to come to some kind of consensus about his representation, about his portrait. So no consensus about his appearance. Everybody agrees in one point though, which is that there is an unexpressed deformity, there is some kind of deformity, but we cannot explain it, we cannot describe it. Cannot explain, cannot describe.

Which is mysterious again, very mysterious, just as there is a mystery behind Dr. Jekyll's protection of Mr. Hyde. And so it is a kind of an impossible task to trace him as well, he has just gone into hiding and nobody can figure out where he is. Thank you for watching, I will

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