

**The Nineteenth Century Novel**  
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**Lecture – 53**  
**The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Chapters 9**

Hello and welcome to week 12's lectures. In today's session, we will be looking at Chapter Nine. If you remember the previous session, we ended with an explosive finale. We saw the death of Mr. Hyde, and it is Mr. Utterson and Mr. Poole who discovered the body of Mr. Hyde in the cabinet in which Dr. Jekyll is supposed to be present. So it is a very mysterious ending, and we are given to understand that its probably a suicide, but we still do not know where exactly Dr. Jekyll is.

And at the end of Chapter Eight we saw that Mr. Utterson took away some papers from the cabinet of Dr. Jekyll, and one was a note asking Mr. Utterson to read Dr. Lanyon's letter and this note is from Dr. Jekyll himself. And we also find that Dr. Jekyll has written a letter to Mr. Utterson too, but he wants his friend to read Dr. Lanyon's letter and then his own letter. Why is this mystery?

It is probably connected to the plotting of this story, and R. L. Stevenson is slowly making this big reveal as to where is Dr. Jekyll.

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## Lanyon's surprise

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.

Now in Chapter Nine, we have the narration of Dr. Lanyon, and this I indicates that this is a first person narrative, and it is narrated by Lanyon. So he is offering this, you know, narrative in the form of a letter to Mr. Utterson the lawyer. So in that letter, he says that “I was a good deal surprised by this; for we were by no means in the habit of correspondence.” We referring to Lanyon and Jekyll, we were by no means in the habit of correspondence.

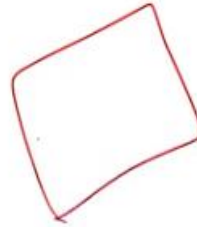
“I had seen the man, dined with him, indeed, the night before” So we had a party at his place, and I met him the night before, and suddenly I receive a letter from him. “And I could imagine nothing in our intercourse,” Nothing in our company, nothing in our conversation, “that should justify formality of registration.” So I was not given to understand that I would get such a formal narrative from my friend Dr. Jekyll.

So he is confused and surprised by receiving, when he receives the letter of Dr. Jekyll at his place. So what does the letter contain? So we are being offered another mystery in that letter.

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## Letter of Dr Jekyll in Dr Lanyon's Letter

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. There was never a day when, if you had said to me, 'Jekyll, my life, my honour, my reason, depend upon you,' I would not have sacrificed my left hand to help you.



So this is how Dr. Jekyll's letter begins, and you need to remember that in Dr. Lanyon's letter we have the letter of Dr. Jekyll too. So if the outer narrative is Dr. Lanyon's, the inner narrative is Dr. Jekyll's. So it is almost like the story within the story, a letter within a letter. And all this is read by, you need to remember, Mr. Utterson. So look at the way there are layers of narrative here.

So truth, or versions, are being pushed into another, you know, section, another discourse. So we are being constantly distanced, there is a distancing effect as well. So it begins, "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. There was never a day when, if you had said to me, 'Jekyll, my life, my honour, my reason, depend upon you.' I would not have sacrificed my left hand to, I would not have sacrificed my left hand to help you."

There is a double negative there, which means I would have sacrificed my left hand to help you. So please note the double negatives, so that it becomes a positive assertion here. So anyway the point is, we have differences of opinion in terms of scientific questions, we have differed at times on scientific questions, but our friendship has continued, you know, as strongly as ever.

At least that is the version according to Dr. Jekyll. And he says that if you had asked me for a favour, if you had asked me that, you know, that you would need my help, I would have done

anything to help you out. And implication is this, that my life, my honour, my reason depend on your help, that your being Dr. Lanyon. So he is asking for Dr. Lanyon's assistance. And it is a crucial assistance, a vital assistance that Dr. Lanyon would offer. As we read the narrative we will come to this understanding.

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## Chapter 9: Dr Lanyon's Narrative

- The book was an ordinary version-book and contained little but a series of dates. These covered a period of many years ...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!!!'

So what exactly does Dr. Jekyll ask Dr. Lanyon to do for him? So he asks him to do one important thing, that is go to his cabinet in his home, the cabinet on top of his lab, and bring back some chemicals. He says that bring back drawer which would contain certain chemicals and a notebook, and he wants the doctor to bring it back to his home in Cavendish Square, a very respectable neighbourhood in which Dr. Lanyon lives.

So what he asks his friend to do is to bring back some equipment for him from his home, from his cabinet on top of the lab, and keep it there for someone to pick it up. So he says that somebody would come and get this stuff from him in the middle of the night. And Dr. Lanyon does as his friend asks him to, he brings back that drawer containing all these chemicals along with this notebook and he is extremely curious.

Curiosity is a running theme in this particular novella. We see Mr. Utterson being extremely curious to understand what is happening in terms of the association between Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. And he in fact even plays the amateur detective. We see that same motive running through

in the figure of Dr. Lanyon too. So what he does is he flips through that book, it seems like some kind of a log book.

And he says that “the book was an ordinary version-book and contained little but a series of dates.” There were a lot of dates in it. “These covered a period of many years ... Here and there a brief remark was appended” Appended means attached “to a date, usually no more than a single word: 'double' occurring perhaps six times in a total of several hundred entries.” So there is this repetitive word of the double.

“And once very early in the list and followed by several marks of exclamation, 'total failure!’” And sometimes he also registers the fact that his experiments have failed, which is indicated by these words total failure. So double is an interesting word, it is a very significant word. We will come to this word once again when we realize what indeed is the crux of this particular narrative, what is it on which the novel, you know, turns on.

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## Lanyon's Narrative

- 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 usefulness.

“All this, though it whetted my curiosity, told me little that was definite. Here were a phial of some tincture,” you know, a small container, glass container which contains some liquid, “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 usefulness.” So this is a rich passage. It looks very interesting to me, I will tell you why.

Firstly, we are reinforced about this notion that Dr. Lanyon is also curious like his friend Mr. Utterson. But he is also mystified, nothing is definite. So he is also mystified, confused, he does not know what exactly is happening. And then we get a viewpoint of Dr. Lanyon about Dr. Jekyll's investigations, and what is that? It is a very important point in the entire novel I would think, it says that his experiments have no practical usefulness, there is no practicality.

There is no benefit, there is no tangible benefit to the kind of experiments that Dr. Jekyll performs. So no use at all to society. So that is very significant, is it not. So here we have a scientific gentleman who is conducting a lot of experiments which do not have any kind of concrete benefit that the society can accrue from such experimentation. So we get that insight, we get that perspective from Dr. Jekyll here.

And we will see how exactly his experiments are not useful, and quite the contrary, you know, his experiments become damaging as we will see towards the end of the novel.

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### Lanyon's meeting with Hyde

- 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 debility of constitution, and — last but not least — with the odd, subjective disturbance caused by his neighbourhood.

Now who is the person who comes to Dr. Lanyon's house in the middle of the night to collect that drawer which contains all the chemicals and the notebook and the paper of salt? It is Mr. Hyde. And this is how Dr. Lanyon reacts to the presence and personality of Hyde. He says "I had never set eyes on him before." Unlike Mr. Utterson who has met him, and Mr. Enfield who has

also met 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, and with his remarkable combination of great muscular activity and great apparent debility of constitution, and - last but not least - with the odd, subjective disturbance caused by his neighbourhood."

So let us kind of take this except, you know, bit by bit. Dr. Lanyon confirms that his stature is small, Mr. Hyde's stature is small, and he looks terrible, to put it simply. He looks horrible and terrible, we do not know exactly why. And there is great muscular activity, he seems as someone who is very energetic in a physical way, even though he is small. So what does that remind us of? Great muscular activity associated with animals. We did see Mr. Poole referring to Mr. Hyde as if he is a monkey, right, and he is also referred to as ape-like quite constantly. In fact, even Jekyll would be referred to his ape-like quality in his final confession.

So great muscular activity is a characteristic that we usually associate with animals. And further, if you just want to list the number of characteristics, the fourth would be the debility, there is something physically disabled. There is something wrong with the makeup of the physique of this particular man. So there is a debility, there is something physically wrong, you know faulty. And finally, and again, we do not know what is that debility, what, why is there a debility, why is that a fault? We do not know. What exactly is the physical inability? We do not know, and that is a mystery, that is a mystery.

In fact, there is this legend that R. L. Stevenson's wife, when she read the manuscript, advised her husband to keep this physical deformity a mystery, not to specify it, and which is why we do not know, and which is why R. L. Stevenson has not specifically mentioned about the nature of the deformity or the debility that is there in Mr. Hyde. So that is a bit of context for you. And finally, there was a subjective disturbance caused by his neighbourhood. When he comes near somebody, that person feels disgusted, repulsed and revulsed by his presence. So he is somehow subhuman, he is like you know, some kind of reptile which evokes that disgust on the beholder.

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## Lanyon's Meeting with Hyde

- This bore some resemblance to incipient rigour, and was accompanied by a marked sinking of the pulse. At the time, I set it down to some idiosyncratic, personal distaste, and merely wondered at the acuteness of the symptoms; but I have since had reason to believe the cause to lie much deeper in the nature of man, and to turn on some nobler hinge than the principle of hatred.

“This bore some resemblance to incipient rigour, and was accompanied by a marked sinking of the pulse.” So we do not know exactly what this is referring to, but critics, and you know, dictionaries suggest that this meaning refers to some kind of stiffening effect on the part of the people who are witnessing, who are looking at Mr. Hyde, and you feel as if your heart beat is going down. So that is the effect that this man/monster creates in you.

“At the time I set it down to some idiosyncratic personal distaste.” Dr. Lanyon is justifying to himself as to why he feels all these, you know, emotions and physical experiences. He kind of thinks that it is just eccentric, you know, reaction on his part, idiosyncratic, personal distaste, “and merely wondered at the acuteness of the symptoms.” So he was able to experience all these symptoms very viscerally, and he was able to account for it, he was able to take stock of his physical reactions.

So the physical reactions are extremely important. The physical reactions of the spectator, which is Dr. Lanyon here, are extremely important because one of the effects of gothic fiction is to provoke or evoke terror on the reader, on the person who is witnessing it. So it is a gothic trope. “But I have reason, but I have had reason to believe the cause to lie much deeper in the nature of man.”

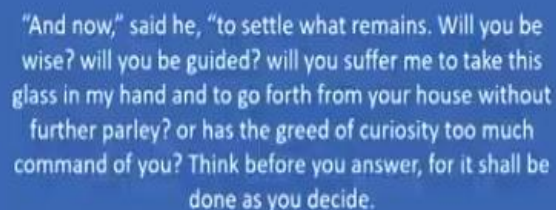


So he says that it could be some other reason. Initially I thought it was distaste and personal eccentricity, but later I realized that, “I since have had reason to believe the cause to lie much deeper in the nature of man, and to turn on some nobler hinge than the principle of hatred.” So it was not just hatred that I had, you know, for this man, it was something deeper in my soul which recognized the, perhaps the evil, for lack of a better word, the evil in Mr. Hyde.

I am distancing myself because of that understanding I instinctively had. So these are all the emotions that Dr. Lanyon discusses with Mr. Utterson via his letter. He is using the letter as a means to communicate. So there is some kind of deeper reason in the nature of man, perhaps to be repulsed by something that is barbaric. So the two contrasts that we have are civilization, which is indicated in the figure of Dr. Lanyon, who lives in this respectable neighbourhood called Cavendish Square, and the barbarity embedded in Mr. Hyde who is representing something non-civilizational, animal-like, bestial, you know, one who is subhuman.

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### Mr Hyde's questions



“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 parley? or has the greed of curiosity too much command of you? Think before you answer, for it shall be done as you decide.

Now Mr. Hyde has received what he had wanted from Dr. Lanyon, and he has that phial ready, he has that you know, liquid which he had prepared ready in front of him on a table. And he asks a set of questions of Dr. Lanyon, he says, “‘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 go forth from your house without further parley?’” Without further you know, dialogue, discussion? “‘Or has

the greed of curiosity too much command of you? Think before you answer, for it shall be done as you decide.”

So we see a set of questions which can be read as being innocent enough, Mr. Hyde being very defensive. And he is asking Dr. Lanyon if Dr. Lanyon would let him go freely without more questions. That is one part of the discussion here. The second part is that he is provoking Dr. Lanyon by asking him if his greed of curiosity has somehow commanded him, has somehow taken superior command over him, and does he want to know more? Is he under the command of his curiosity? And he says think before you answer for I will respond accordingly. So he wants to know if Dr. Lanyon wants to know more about him. More about what is in front of him in that glass, and he is waiting for his answer.

And Dr. Lanyon is hooked. He is hooked because as Mr. Hyde rightly, you know, assesses, the greed of curiosity does get the upper hand, does take the command over him, and he says yes, I would like to know more because I have gone so much in this mysterious business that I want to see the end. That is what Dr. Lanyon says, I want to see the end of this mystery.

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## Mr Hyde's questions

As you decide, you shall be left as you were before, and neither richer nor wiser, unless the sense of service rendered to a man in mortal distress may be counted as a kind of riches of the soul. 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 stagger the unbelief of Satan.”

And Mr. Hyde, before he makes that reveal, before he makes that big revelation which will shatter the world for Dr. Lanyon says, “As you decide, you shall be left as you were before, and neither richer nor wiser, unless the sense of service rendered to a man in mortal distress may be

counted as a kind of riches of the soul.” So he is offering a set of ideas which reacts to the first set of questions he had asked.

So he says that if you think that you do not want to know more and if you let me go, you will be neither richer nor wiser, you will be in the same state as you had been in before, unless you think that your service can be considered as a kind of a riches that your soul has acquired. So you have done me good service, and therefore you will be rich in soul. So that is just what you are going to experience.

But if you want to know more, you shall, “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.” If you want to know more, a new province of knowledge, a new domain of knowledge will open up new pathways, new avenues to fame will be shown to you, and power shall be laid open to you as well, you will also become powerful here in this room.

I have the power to offer those things to you says Hyde, upon the instant, just like that, very quickly. “And your sight shall be blasted by a prodigy to stagger the unbelief of Satan.” He says that you will be shown something that will just, you know, blast away your sight, and it might even stagger, you know, the disbelieving Satan. So my revelation has that kind of power, you will be shell shocked to say the least.

And look at the rhetoric, look at the rhetoric of Mr. Hyde. It is very powerful rhetoric, it is powerful speech. And look at the language that he uses to whet the curiosity, he is just whipping up the curiosity of Dr. Lanyon. He is after all a scientific gentlemen, a physician, and of course he would want to know more as to what is there in this new province of knowledge. And you also need to understand that he is tempting him, he is tempting him like Satan himself.

He is tempting him like Dr. Faustus was tempted by Mephistopheles in that famous play by Marlowe. And Dr. Lanyon falls into the temptation, and says yes, I want to know more. So that is the essence of Dr. Lanyon’s response to this particular speech.

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“He put the glass to his lips and drank at one gulp.”



This is an illustration of this particular scene. So we have Dr. Lanyon here who is looking very suspiciously at this figure who is bent down, who is going to reach for the glass, that is Mr. Hyde, and we have an image of the skull indicating what is going to happen to not only Dr. Lanyon and perhaps to Mr. Hyde as well eventually. So there is a foreshadowing of fatal things for these two characters there, embedded in the illustration. And this you know, image is completely dominated by the colour black. There is a little bit of light in the centre, the rest is like full of grey shades. So a lot of symbolism of evil is offered through the play of dark and black shades.

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## The transformation scene

He put the glass to his lips and drank at one gulp. A cry followed; he reeled, staggered, clutched 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 swell—his face became suddenly black and the features seemed to melt and alter—and the next moment, I had sprung to my feet and leaped back against the wall, my arm raised to shield me from that prodigy, my mind submerged in terror.

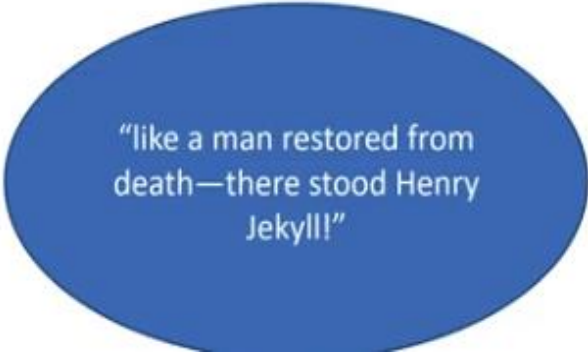
So what Mr. Hyde does is he “put the glass to his lips and drank at one gulp. A cry followed; he reeled, staggered, clutched at the table and held on, staring with injected eyes, gasping with open mouth; and as I looked there came, I thought, a change - he seemed to swell.” You remember Mr. Hyde is a small figure. “He seemed to swell - his face became suddenly black and the features seemed to melt and alter.” There is physical transformation happening in the physique of Mr. Hyde.

“And the next moment, I had sprung to my feet and leapt back against the wall.” So Dr. Lanyon is literally taken aback, he is thrown back, and he is, he is having his back against the wall here in this moment. “My arm raised to shield me from that prodigy,” so he is just trying to protect himself by, you know, raising his arm in front of him, “and my mind submerged in terror.” So he is fully terrorized by this image in front of him.

This figure that had you know, gulped a liquid and is transforming, there is a physical transformation, a ghastly transformation. It is horrible to look at, and Dr. Lanyon, the respectable middle class Doctor is completely thrown. He is completely, you know, horrified by what is happening in front of him. So his mind is submerged in terror.

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## Jekyll and Hyde



“like a man restored from death—there stood Henry Jekyll”

So Mr. Hyde becomes Dr. Jekyll here. “Like a man restored from death - there stood Henry Jekyll.” So we understand very clearly that it is, you know, Dr. Jekyll who is masquerading as

Mr. Hyde. So Dr. Jekyll has prepared a chemical potion which he drinks and transforms into Mr. Hyde, the small, evil minded figure which haunts the streets of London at night and commits crimes against the innocent and the vulnerable.

So if Mr. Hyde is the one who trampled on a little girl of, you know, of less than ten years old that particular night in London, then it is Dr. Jekyll too who has done that crime, because it is Dr. Jekyll who is in the person, who is in the physique of Mr. Hyde. So the two figures are one and the same, and Dr. Lanyon gets physical, tangible, concrete proof of that fact.

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### Lanyon's declaration

- 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.

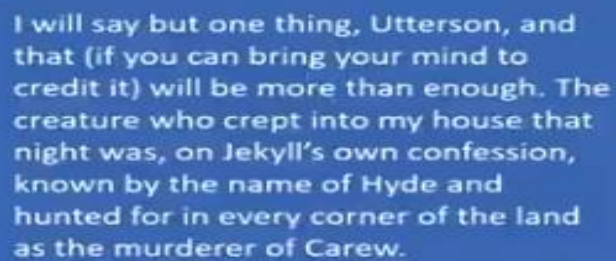
So what is the effect of this transformation on Dr. Lanyon? He says, "My life is shaken to its roots; sleep has left me; the deadliest terror sits by me at all hours of the day and night." So he is haunted by this transformation, this change, the physical change, and he is unable to sleep. "I feel that my days are numbered" In fact he feels that he is dying, "and that I must die; and yet I shall die incredulous." And in fact I find it still hard to believe that this man, this Dr. Jekyll is Hyde, and Hyde is Dr. Jekyll

"As for the moral turpitude that man unveiled to me, even with tears of penitence, I cannot, even in my memory, dwell on it without a start of horror." So Mr. Hyde, once he has transformed into Dr. Jekyll gives him a history of what he did and how he came about in doing such things. He says that even though Dr. Jekyll is full of penitence, full of sorrow, he is full of regret.

Despite all that, I cannot even in memory, I being Dr. Lanyon, he says that despite his regret I cannot dwell on his narrative without horror. So what is dominant for Dr. Lanyon is the images of terror that he was shown so, you know, rudely, harshly by Dr. Jekyll.

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## Lanyon's declaration



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.

“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.” So Lanyon is coming to a close with his letter, he is winding up his letter, and Lanyon says that, you know, if you believe my version that will be a credit in itself.

I want your, you know, belief in what I have said, I want your faith. And he says that the creature who came to my house that night was, by Jekyll's own confession, Hyde, right? And it was Hyde who is being hunted down in London as the murderer of Carew and as the person who had injured that little girl that particular day in London. So we realize that the criminal figures are one and the same.

So Jekyll is as much culpable for the crimes of homicide, brutal homicide that Mr. Hyde is also culpable of.

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## S G Hulme-Beaman, 1930



So this is one of the illustrations of that change that Mr. Hyde undergoes in order to become Dr. Jekyll. So this happens in the home of Dr. Lanyon. Thank you for watching I will continue in the

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