

Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde, Robert Louis Stephenson

The Duality Of His Self

And it chanced that the direction of my scientific studies, which led wholly towards the mystic and the transcendental, reacted and shed a strong light on this consciousness of the perennial war among my members.

With every day, I drew more steadily nearer to that truth: that man is not truly one, but truly TWO.

It was on the moral side, and in my own person, that I learned to recognize the thorough and primitive DUALITY of man;

I saw that, of the two natures that contended in the field of my consciousness, even if I could rightly be said to be either, it was only because I was radically both.

The Decision To Separate The Two Selves

I had learned to dwell with pleasure, as a beloved daydream, on the thought of the separation of these elements. If each, I told myself, could be housed in separate identities, life would be relieved of all that was unbearable; the unjust might go his way, delivered from the aspirations and remorse of his more upright twin; and the just could walk steadfastly and securely on his upward path, doing the good things in which he found his pleasure, and no longer exposed to disgrace and penitence by the hands of this extraneous evil. It was the curse of mankind that these incongruous natures were thus bound together – these polar twins - continuously struggling. How, then, were they dissociated?

The Pleasure, Ye Hideousness Of Mr. Hyde

Then these agonies began swiftly to subside, and I came to myself as if out of a great sickness. There was something strange in my sensations, something indescribably new and, from its very novelty, incredibly sweet. I felt younger, lighter, happier in body; within I was conscious of a heady recklessness. I knew myself, at the first breath of this new life, to be more wicked, tenfold more wicked, sold a slave to my original evil; and the thought, in that moment, braced and delighted me like wine.

I have observed that when I wore the semblance of Edward Hyde, none could come near to me at first without a visible misgiving of the flesh.

This, as I take it, was because all human beings, as we meet them, are co-mingled out of good and evil: and Edward Hyde, alone in the ranks of mankind, was pure evil.

When I would come back from these excursions, I was often plunged into a kind of wonder at my vicarious depravity. Edward Hyde's every act and thought centered on self; drinking pleasure with bestial avidity from any degree of torture to another; relentless like a man of stone. Henry Jekyll stood at times aghast before the acts of Edward Hyde; but the situation was apart from ordinary laws, and insidiously relaxed the grasp of conscience.

Jekyll's Effort To Make Restitution For Hyde, Yet Only To Provoke Him

I resolved in my future conduct to redeem the past; and I can say with honesty that my resolve was fruitful of some good. You know yourself how earnestly, in the last months of the last year, I laboured to relieve suffering.

Much was done for others, and (that) the days passed quietly, almost happily for myself.

But I was still cursed with my duality of purpose;

And as the first edge of my penitence wore off, the lower side of me, so long indulged - so recently chained down, began to growl for licence. Not that I dreamed of resuscitating Hyde - the bare idea of that would startle me to frenzy:" ...