

Strange case of dr.  
jekyll and mr. hyde by  
robert louis  
stevenson:  
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## **The Double**

The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde is a kind of a horrific gothic story. We have the insane scientist, the mysterious monster, crime, disappearance and everything we need. One of the most interesting aspect of it is the appearance of the double in the personality. We have all heard stories or watched films like Black Swan about personality duality. When we reach the end of the The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde a lot of question arise in our minds: what are the negative and positive sides of the personality of the character in the story, what controls the double if it can be controlled at all, what controls which sides come over the other side, when the double occurs in a personality does the person capable to realize it or is it unconscious, and the questions which are the most interesting for us: it a real disease, if it is then what causes it and how can the person realize it?

First of all, in the novel the positive and the negative sides of the personality can be easily recognized even if we are not psychologists. The positive side is represented by Dr. Jekyll and the negative side appears as Mr. Hyde. The difference between positive and negative can be removed from the actions and the character of the players. The character of Dr. Jekyll embodies the good. He is the outstanding doctor, scientist of the Victorian society who is rich, good-looking and beneficent, but absent-minded and too outgoing. In spite of Jekyll, Hyde is a promotion being who is not capable and do not want to reign his desires. He is unscrupulous, the crime and the pleasures makes him happy. What he wants he get it no matter what, he does not care about the consequences. Not even murder stops him. As the name also represent

some eeriness, Mr. Hyde is the part of the personality which is ridden in Jekyll. The physical appearance of these characters can also be an evidence of this diversity between good and bad. While Jekyll is tall and strong, Hyde is small and gives us a feeling of uncanny. According to Sigmund Freud the feeling of uncanny can be originated in unfamiliar things (Freud: "The uncanny"). Nobody can give a complete description of him, nobody knows how he really looks like, but everybody knows that he has some kind of deformation. As I mentioned the actions of the players also play an important role in the characteristic. Jekyll serves the public good with his profession, but Hyde is a rebel who kills a person without regretting it. Do you think that Jekyll would be able to do such a thing? I do not think so. Jekyll lives by rules, he would never take away a person's life. That is the best evidence for the present good and bad in the novel.

The second question which arises in our mind at the end of the story is that what controls the double and can it be controlled at all? The answer has a rather psychological basis. The name of Sigmund Freud appears again here, who is considered to be the creator of psychoanalysis. In the mind of Freud, there are three main agencies in people's mind which are responsible for keeping the control and their interactions resulting the human behaviour. These three agencies are called: ID, ego and superego. In the ID people's mind store desires which are repressed, because they go against laws or social expectations. The superego is responsible for human's conscientious behaviour. The ego works as a balancing agency between the ID and the superego. It makes sure that the desires stay at their places and superego keep the rules, the social expectations and laws at the first place. There is a

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very thin line between consciousness and unconsciousness, which is easy to step over. When the ego loses control over the ID, the repressed desires come to the surface and lodge themselves in the superego, which considers them as allowed things. As a result, an alterego turns up, which is known as the double (Freud: Pszichoanalízis). In The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Hyde is obviously the double of Jekyll. Hyde is considered to be the 'pure evil', but he is just a part of Jekyll's personality. The answer to the question what controls the double or can it be controlled at all is the desire of the person to maximise its own self-esteem.

Another answer is needed for the question of what controls which sides come over the other side. I would say that humans will for joy and self-realization. In the investigated story Hyde wanted to live on his own way, wanted to be free. The background of it lies in the Victorian age (Bényei 89). At that time Christian world view was the accepted view of world, work was in the first place and loss of pleasure resulted hidden desires and wills in people's mind. This diversity between wanted and allowed things at the time created Hyde in Jekyll and it is also allowed him to take over control Jekyll's body and mind. These differences also encouraged people to do things secretly as in the story people fulfilled their desires and forbidden things in the shadow of the night in order to keep it a secret and not to be judged with criticism by people who have the same desires, but they are not able to achieve their goals. Why? I have to say that fear and the knowledge that these are hardly judged and in contrast with the laws of the Victorian age.

Further question is, when the double occurs in a personality does the person capable to realize it or is it unconscious? Not from the very beginning, but there is a point when the person realizes that there is something wrong. For Jekyll that point was the moment when he woke up as Hyde. He does not know why, because he has not had a problem with the serum so far. He also realizes that Hyde began to overcome him, so it turns out that he has to make a decision as soon as possible. A decision which will affect his further life: choose between Jekyll and Hyde. Would you choose to give up all the desires you have just to fit in the social expectations? It is a hard decision, isn't it? It was not for Jekyll. He knew what he had to do, but things not always go as we plan. It is a psychological fact that when a double occurs it does not disappear except taking constant medication or end with the death of the person. Why Jekyll sacrifice himself? Here is a quotation from the chapter titled 'Henry Jekyll's Full Statement of The Case': " A change had come over me. It was no longer the fear of the gallows, it was the horror of being Hyde that racked me" (Stevenson 92). It is that simple. Nobody wants to lose control over their own body.

Last but not least, is it a real disease, if it is then what causes it and how can the person realize it? Among mental illnesses personality duality is a really serious disease like schizophrenia. According to researchers dealing with mental illnesses these confusions are caused by the imbalance of the instinctual impulses (Dr. Tringer László: " A pszichiátria tankönyve"). As I mentioned, the disease for Dr. Jekyll was caused by the too strict social expectations at the Victorian age. The diseases which we discuss here have several foreshadows. The two most well-known presages are the

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hallucination and paranoid behavior, but we can count the disorganized speech and thinking here, as well. Like most of the mental illnesses it appears in stages. In the story, Hyde is always in a rush. As we read it we have a feeling that he wants to hide from someone, like he feels that someone is after him, follows him. This can be the evidence that the person does have a paranoid behavior and we can take it as a sign of mental illness. These mental diseases do not disappear easily. Of course, they can be cured with medicine, but they are like relive a trauma again and again while the bad memories take the person to madness. Jekyll also feels crazy as we move towards the end of the story and he wants to end his double. As a consequence he dies.

To sum up, The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde is based on a mental illness. The age of the writer gave him the idea of the double and his aim was to get people's attention and draws their attention for the double life which they lived. From the reaction of people in the story we can make a conclusion about the double. The double is scary and give us a feeling of some kind of deformation. People have a fear of deformed things or we can say people as well. The double is present in every single human being in the world, but what really matters is that what quantity it surmounts in the personality of a person.