

TOP READERS

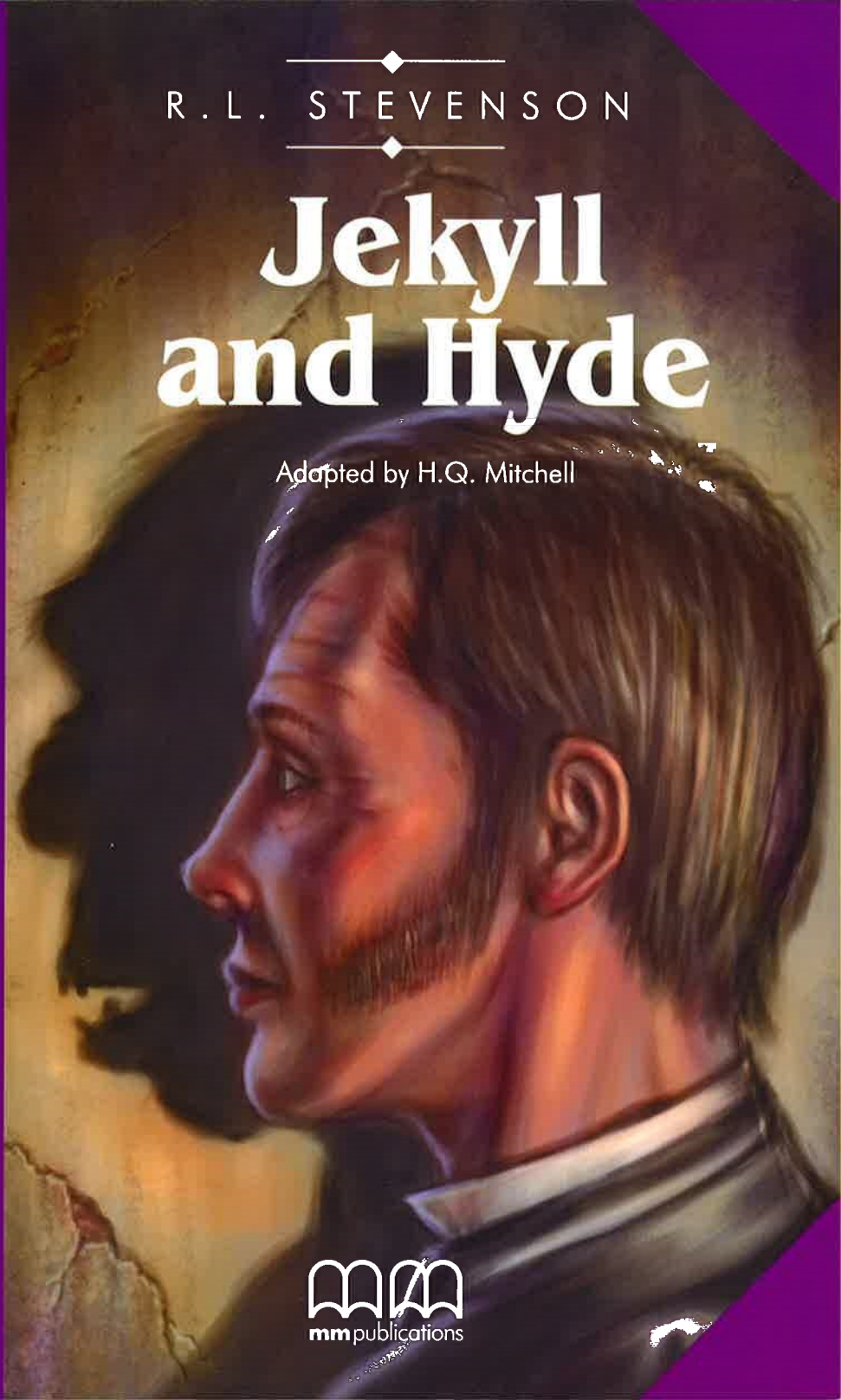
R. L. STEVENSON

Jekyll and Hyde

Adapted by H.Q. Mitchell

level
4


mm publications



Introduction

Robert Louis Stevenson was born in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1850. His father wanted Robert to become an engineer, but ill-health forced him to choose another career, and he studied law. Dissatisfied with the lifestyle this offered, he decided to become a professional writer.

Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde was published in 1886 and was an immediate success. Critics praised him for it, some referring to the book as 'a perfect fantastical tale'. The inspiration for it came from a dream Stevenson had. Stevenson always had a strong interest in the dark side of life and his ill-health made him further interested in death.

The novel is written as an investigation. Each new event deepens the mystery and strangeness of the plot. The climax is in the form of a letter from Dr Jekyll, which finally explains all the strange things that have taken place in the story.

The main idea in the book is the dark side that some people might have in their characters and the struggle between Good and Evil.

From 1912 to today, about 20 film adaptations have been made of this book.

Stevenson is equally famous for other books, particularly the adventure novels *Treasure Island* (1883) and *Kidnapped* (1886).

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CHAPTER 1

MR GABRIEL UTTERSON, THE LAWYER, WAS A MAN WHO WAS moderate in the things he liked, never overdoing things. He was also very careful in the way he treated others. If he saw a friend acting wrongly, he would not say anything. He felt that his friends should make their own way through life, without being criticised. However, he would try to help if someone asked him.

One of his friends was a cousin of his, named Richard Enfield. They liked to take long walks together. People said they did not usually talk while walking; they liked to just look around. These walks were very important to both men, and they made sure nothing was allowed to cancel one of them.

One day, on one of these walks, they went down a side street, in a busy part of London. The street was small but had shops which were very busy. They were well-painted and looked bright and attractive. They gave an impression of happiness, laughter and freshness.

But, at one point, the line of shops was broken by the entry to a courtyard. Right at the entry stood a tall, dark building, with something very sinister about it. It was two-storeys high, run-down and dirty, and it looked as if it badly needed repainting. There were no windows looking towards the street, only an old, worn-out door.

Enfield pointed at the door. "This door is connected in my mind with a very odd story", he said.

"What story?" Utterson asked.

Enfield began. "Well, this is what happened. I was coming home late. It was 3 o'clock in the morning, a dark winter's morning. All the streets were empty.

Suddenly, I saw not one, but two figures at once: a little man, walking fast, on one side, and, coming down a side street, a girl who was maybe eight or ten years old. She was running as fast as she could. Well, they ran into each other at a corner. He knocked the child to the ground and didn't even stop to see how she was. He just continued, while she lay there screaming. I ran after him, grabbed him and dragged him back to the place of the attack. A group of people had already gathered around the girl.



Her family turned up at the scene and a doctor was called for the girl. It was then that a strange thing happened. As I was holding the man, he turned to look at me. His look was so ugly that it made me sweat. And, Gabriel, it wasn't just me who felt that way. The girl's family, even the good doctor, seemed so angry they could have killed him. There was something about him that made everyone hate him instantly.

The man looked worried but appeared to be more concerned about getting away than paying any attention to the condition of the girl.

Well, it was obvious that he needed to be punished for his actions, particularly since he didn't care about what he had done. So, we told him we would let everyone in London know what he'd done, so that he would lose any friends he had, and no-one would trust him anymore.

In his cool way, he said 'I'm alone here, and, as a gentleman, I wish to avoid any scandal. I'm willing to give some money to make up for what I've done. Tell me how much you want.' We said one hundred pounds and he protested, but he finally agreed.

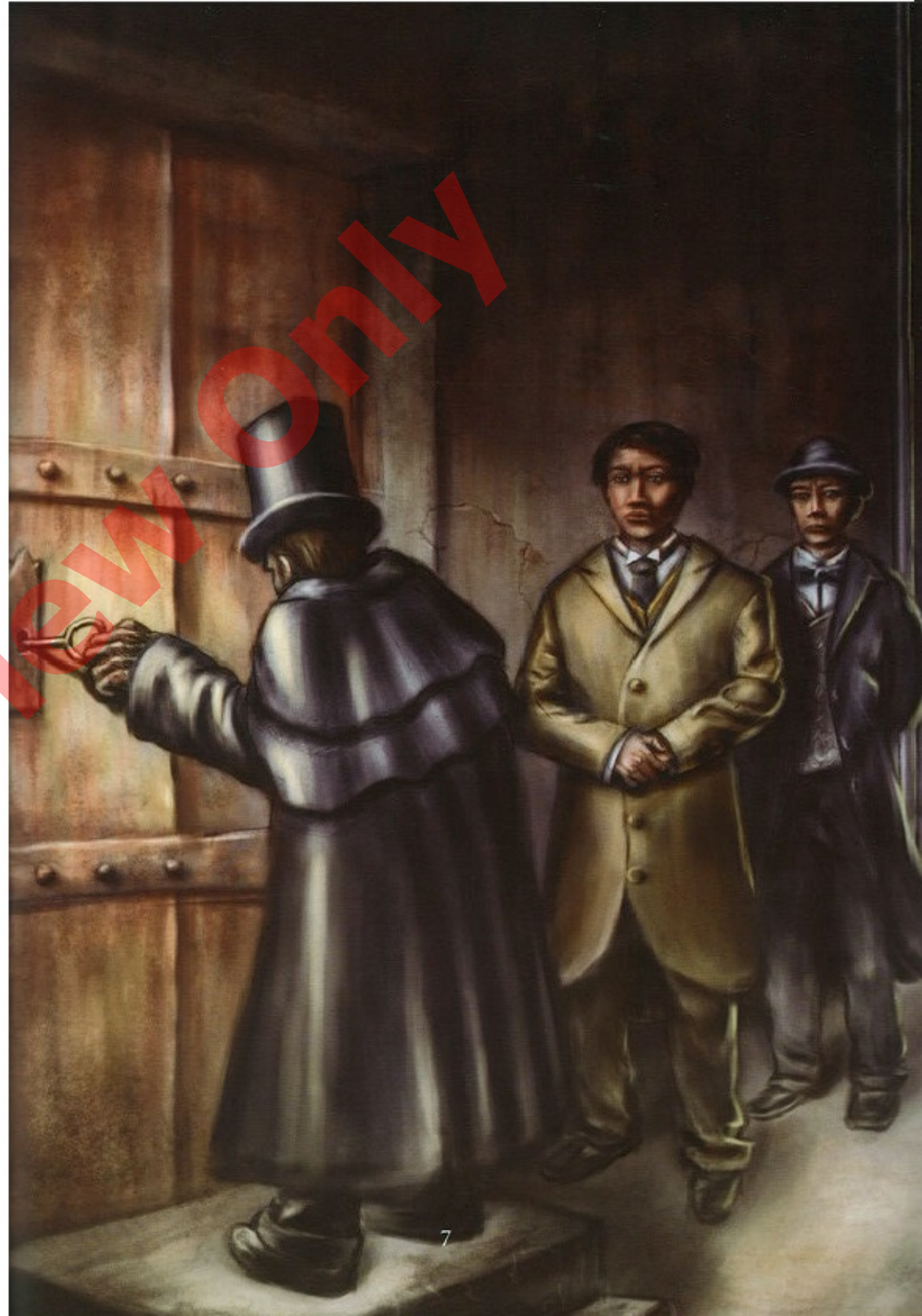
The next move was to get the money. Well, Gabriel, he took us to the very door I started this story with!

When we arrived there, he took out a key, went in and came back out with ten pounds in gold and a cheque for the rest of the money.

I was surprised to see the name of the writer of the cheque. It would not be right to name the person. But it was someone with a high reputation in London, someone who people look up to and respect. I knew he could easily afford such a sum of money. But was the cheque genuine? Perhaps it had been stolen, and someone signed it pretending to be the original writer? After all, it was hard to believe that the well-respected person who had signed the cheque would have anything to do with such a man as this, who didn't care about the wrong things he did.

So, a group of us spent all night at my house: myself, the doctor, the child's father and the nasty fellow. In the morning we all went together to the bank. I told the bank workers the cheque was probably a fake. But, no, the cheque was genuine, and it was changed for cash!"

Enfield had finished his story. Both men walked on in silence.



CHAPTER 2

UTTERSON'S MIND WAS FIXED ON THE STORY HE HAD JUST heard. "A bad business," he said. "Yes," Enfield responded, "a bad business. I am sure no-one would want to have anything to do with the nasty fellow I saw. On the other hand, the writer of the cheque is famous for doing good in the world. So, what makes him give his money to that hateful man? Blackmail, I think. Maybe there are things he did when he was younger which must be kept secret. Small things, no doubt, but enough to make him unhappy if they were known. But, even if I am right, there are still many questions that need answers."

There was silence for a time. Enfield could see Utterson was thinking deeply about the whole matter. After some time Utterson asked "Does the writer of the cheque live there?"

Enfield replied "Well, it's possible but I cannot say with certainty. He lives in some square or other. I went to the courtyard myself to see, and the buildings are so close to each other that it's hard to tell where one house ends and another begins."

"And you haven't asked about the place with the door or tried to investigate the whole thing more?"

Enfield said "No. It would look as if I'm judging someone for their actions and I don't want to do this. It may start trouble. If I start digging up things, who knows what I might discover? No, the stranger things look, the less I ask. That's my rule!"

"That's a good rule," said the lawyer, "but I still want to ask the name of that man who walked over the child".

"Well, I don't think there will be any trouble if I tell you that. His name was Hyde," said Enfield.

"What did he look like?" asked Utterson.

Enfield hesitated. "He is hard to describe. There is something very disturbing about him, more than just his violent behaviour. He seems to be extraordinary and somehow in-human, however, I can't say exactly why."

Again, there was a long silence until Utterson asked "You're sure he used a key?"



CHAPTER 1

Comprehension

1 Read Chapter 1 and match the two halves of the sentences.

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. Mr Gabriel Utterson liked | a. to give money to the girl's family. |
| 2. The lawyer tried | b. a well-known man. |
| 3. A young girl was knocked | c. taking long walks with his friend. |
| 4. The little man agreed | d. to help when asked. |
| 5. The cheque was written by | e. to the ground. |

2 Put the following events in the order which they happened.

Write 1-5 in the boxes.

- It was very early in the morning.
- A doctor was called to the scene.
- Money was provided for the injured person.
- Richard Enfield was returning home.
- Two people ran into each other.

Vocabulary

3 Choose a, b, or c to complete the sentences below.

- Yesterday's picnic was _____ because of heavy rain.
a. signed b. treated c. cancelled
- The policeman _____ the thief's arm when he tried to run away.
a. dragged b. grabbed c. knocked
- When I lost my passport, the embassy gave me a new one _____.
a. wrongly b. instantly c. particularly
- Jim has been saving his pocket money for a month but he still can't _____ a digital camera.
a. afford b. avoid c. protest
- The painting he had bought for £ 2,000 proved to be a(n) _____.
a. fake b. original c. genuine

4 Find words in Chapter 1 which mean the same as:

- evil-looking, frightening _____ (page 4)
- came together in one place _____ (page 4)
- received a penalty for a crime or an action _____ (page 6)
- emotionally cold _____ (page 6)
- strongly disagreed _____ (page 6)
- amount of money _____ (page 6)

Follow-up activities

5 Discuss.

- How can the house you live in affect your mood and behaviour?
- Why do you think the little man didn't stop to see if the girl was hurt?
- Can money ever be a substitute for love?
- What do you think about Utterson's attitude towards other people? Do you think people should be judged by their actions?
- What do you think Mr Utterson will find out next about this mysterious man?

6 Imagine you are the girl knocked down in the street. Write an incident report, from your point of view, for the police. You should include your age, address, where you were going to and exactly what happened. (80 - 100 words)