🕿 True Identity 🕿

How much would you risk?

How far would you go and how much would you risk in order finding the truth? Dr. Jekyll transforms throughout the book into an alter-ego much worse than his own, Mr. Hyde. In this book, Dr. Jekyll created a potion so that when ingested, he could turn into a man that no one knew, do crimes and go unnoticed. A man named Mr. Enfield witnesses a crime that Mr. Hyde was convicted of and eventually tracks down the criminal to find that Jekyll and Hyde share the same body. In the novella, Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Robert Louise Stevenson develops the idea that people have both a civil and savage side through the exploration of Jekyll and Hyde’s personalities.

Dr. Jekyll is a gentleman. He is respectful of other, he is caring, smart, quaint, and most defiantly not rude. All through the book, he gradually realizes that it is not good or safe to drink the potion and share the identity of Hyde. He writes a letter telling Utterson what to do in order to find Hyde. Dr. Henry Jekyll was a man of trust, because he trusted others it made others feel comfortable around him. “This is very good of you, this is downright good of you, and I cannot find words to thank you in. I believe you fully; I would trust you before any man alive, ay, before myself.” Most of the time it takes time to gain trust, and to have someone trust another man more than they could trust themselves tells how much they are respected. In the book, Mr. Jekyll was believed to be blackmailed by Mr. Hyde and there was worry for Jekyll’s safety. Since Jekyll trusted Utterson more than himself explains that there is a self conflict within the man, maybe something evil, like a dual personality. Henry Jekyll was a very trustworthy man as mentioned, but the fact that he had an identity hiding within, it made everything more complicated. Mr. Hyde made everything harder.

Just because Mr. Hyde was a figure created by science, doesn’t mean he wasn’t at all less real that than anyone else. This man committed crimes than any sane person wouldn’t think of. Hyde’s savageness increases dramatically as Utterson and Enfield track the creature down. He trampled a little girl and felt no remorse for her. This man is not compassionated, he has a horrible conscience, and Mr. Hyde is most definitely the complete opposite of Dr. Jekyll. “For the man trampled calmly over the child’s body and left her screaming on the ground. It sounds nothing to hear, but it was hellish to see. It wasn’t like a man; it was like some damned Juggernaut.” Common sense should be known in everyone’s mind, and it is the civil thing to apologize if someone else gets hurt on your behalf, Mr. Hyde doesn’t have apologetic feelings. When Mr. Enfield caught Hyde when he witnessed the trampling, Hyde was to give Enfield one hundred pounds to go towards the child’s family, Hyde gave him the money, but most of it was within a cheque signed by Mr. Henry Jekyll. It was believed that Mr. Hyde had blackmailed Jekyll. Civil and savage can be within the same person, both identities increase or decrease, depending on the person who is creating those emotions.

When it comes to opposites, Henry Jekyll and Edward Hyde are the perfect examples of dual personalities. Jekyll is the respectable man while Hyde is the savage criminal. The two men progress throughout the book into a realization that there isn’t enough room in the world for both of them and that Jekyll should diminish Hyde from his life. When Mr. Utterson and Poole, the butler, entered the room to find Mr. Hyde dying on the floor, they realized that Mr. Jekyll used to medicine Poole was giving him in order to create the potion for the transformations. “They mounted the stair in silence, and still with an occasional awestruck glance at the dead body, proceeded more thoroughly to examine the contents of the cabinet. At one table, there were traces of chemical work, various measured heaps of some white salt being laid on glass saucers, as though for an experiment in which the unhappy man had been prevented.” They eventually came to the realization that Hyde and Jekyll were the same people. Mr. Utterson had doubts though, he thought Dr. Jekyll had killed Hyde and fled the scene, until he received a letter explaining what Jekyll had done. In the end, neither one of the opposite men were successful.

Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde explores the dual nature of one man, one being polite and quaint, another being brutal and cruel. The civil and savage sides of a person are exposed. Even though Hyde and Jekyll are the same person, doesn’t mean they had to share the same traits, emotions, or identity. All could have been avoided if Dr. Jekyll hadn’t have taken the risk to drink the potion, risking death and all. Dual personalities are all over the world, medically and culturally.