



THE MAN WITH TWO FACES

Robert Louis Stevenson and his *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*

Most of us have two sides – a good one and a dark one! The book *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* is about the **struggle**¹ between them.

The main character, Doctor Jekyll, believes that **separating**² one's good and bad side makes a person truly free. He succeeds by experimenting with chemicals and transforms (changes) from the 'good' doctor to the 'evil' Mr Hyde.

*"He shook his stick at the old man, who stepped back in surprise. Then he hit the old man violently with the stick and **knocked him to the ground**³. He beat the helpless body again and again."*

At first Dr Jekyll enjoys being Mr Hyde – he is free, strong, and **confident**⁴. But slowly the actions of the evil Mr Hyde become out of control and Dr Jekyll tries to stop him. However, Mr Hyde has become part of his personality, and the doctor cannot separate the two of them anymore.

*"Once, in the early days, it had failed completely, and sometimes I had had to take a **double dose**⁵ before I changed into Hyde. Now, however, it was quite easy to become Hyde – the problem was to become Jekyll again after my adventures. My good self and my evil self were fighting for my mind and body – and my evil self was winning."*

Dr Jekyll can no longer control his dark side and finally realizes that he will stay in the Mr Hyde character forever...

Jo Molloy (UK)

DISCUSS

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Everybody has two sides to their character.

VOCABULARY

¹ **struggle** ['strʌg(ə)l] – zápas

² **to separate** ['sepəreɪt] – oddělit

³ **knocked him to the ground** – srazil ho k zemi

⁴ **confident** ['kɒnfɪd(ə)nt] – sebejistý

⁵ **double dose** – dvojitá dávka

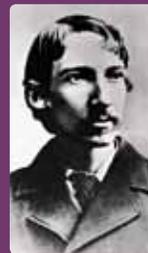
⁶ **to develop** [dɪ'veləp] – vyvinout

⁷ **to expand** [ɪk'spænd] – rozšířit se

⁸ **to capture** ['kæptʃə] – zachytit

R. L. STEVENSON

R. L. Stevenson wrote *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* in 1886 at a time when Victorian Britain was going through great changes. New technologies **were being developed**⁶ and the British Empire **was expanding**⁷ around the world. The book **captures**⁸ the mood of pessimism and fear of future.



extract

"I have used the last of the old chemicals, and for the moment I am Henry Jekyll again. But I cannot write much more – I have very little time. If Hyde returns while I am writing this confession, he will tear it to pieces to annoy me. If I finish it, however, he will probably not notice it. He lives only for the moment, and he is already a changed man. He is like a trapped animal now."

COMPETITION

Win titles from the Oxford Bookworms series. Four of you will get fifteen books for the whole class! Listen to the end of the story on our website or CD and try to answer the following question: "What does Jekyll's evil side Mr Hyde listen to?" Send an email (subject: Stevenson) with your answer, your name and the name of your school to competition@bridge-online.cz by May 20, 2012.



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