# COMPREHENSION

**Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde by Robert Louis Stevenson**

*In this extract, Dr. Henry Jekyll has asked Dr. Lanyon to retrieve a drawer from his laboratory. He states that a man will come and collect the drawer from Dr. Lanyon at midnight.*

“Have you got it?” he cried. “Have you got it?” And so lively was his impatience that he even laid his hand upon my arm and sought to shake me.

I put him back, conscious at his touch of a certain icy pang along my blood. “Come, sir,” said I. “You forget that I have not yet the pleasure of your acquaintance. Be seated, if you please.” And I showed him an example, and sat down myself in my customary seat and with as fair an imitation of my ordinary manner to a patient, as the lateness of the hour, the nature of my preoccupations, and the horror I had of my visitor, would suffer me to muster.

“I beg your pardon, Dr. Lanyon,” he replied civilly enough. “What you say is very well founded; and my impatience has shown its heels to my politeness. I come here at the instance of your colleague, Dr. Henry Jekyll, on a piece of business of some moment; and I understood...” He paused and put his hand to his throat, and I could see, in spite of his collected manner, that he was wrestling against the approaches of the hysteria—“I understood, a drawer...”

But here I took pity on my visitor’s suspense, and some perhaps on my own growing curiosity.

“There it is, sir,” said I, pointing to the drawer, where it lay on the floor behind a table and still covered with the sheet.

He sprang to it, and then paused, and laid his hand upon his heart; I could hear his teeth grate with the convulsive action of his jaws; and his face was so ghastly to see that I grew alarmed both for his life and reason.

“Compose yourself,” said I.

He turned a dreadful smile to me, and as if with the decision of despair, plucked away the sheet. At sight of the contents, he uttered one loud sob of such immense relief that I sat petrified. And the next moment, in a voice that was already fairly well under control, “Have you a graduated glass?” he asked.

I rose from my place with something of an effort and gave him what he asked.

He thanked me with a smiling nod, measured out a few minims of the red tincture and added one of the powders. The mixture, which was at first of a reddish hue, began, in proportion as the crystals melted, to brighten in colour, to effervesce audibly, and to throw off small fumes of vapour. Suddenly and at the same moment, the ebullition ceased and the compound changed to a dark purple, which faded again more slowly to a watery green. My visitor, who had watched these metamorphoses with a keen eye, smiled, set down the glass upon the table, and then turned and looked upon me with an air of scrutiny.

“And now,” said he, “to settle what remains. Will you be wise? will you be guided? will you suffer me to take this glass in my hand and to go forth from your house without further parley? or has the greed of curiosity too much command of you? Think before you answer, for it shall be done as you decide. As you decide, you shall be left as you were before, and neither richer nor wiser, unless the sense of service rendered to a man in mortal distress may be counted as a kind of riches of the soul. Or, if you shall so prefer to choose, a new province of knowledge and new avenues to fame and power shall be laid open to you, here, in this room, upon the instant; and your sight shall be blasted by a prodigy to stagger the unbelief of Satan.”

“Sir,” said I, affecting a coolness that I was far from truly possessing, “you speak enigmas, and you will perhaps not wonder that I hear you with no very strong impression of belief. But I have gone too far in the way of inexplicable services to pause before I see the end.”

“It is well,” replied my visitor. “Lanyon, you remember your vows: what follows is under the seal of our profession. And now, you who have so long been bound to the most narrow and material views, you who have denied the virtue of transcendental medicine, you who have derided your superiors—behold!”

He put the glass to his lips and drank at one gulp. A cry followed; he reeled, staggered, clutched at the table and held on, staring with injected eyes, gasping with open mouth; and as I looked there came, I thought, a change—he seemed to swell—his face became suddenly black and the features seemed to melt and alter—and the next moment, I had sprung to my feet and leaped back against the wall, my arms raised to shield me from that prodigy, my mind submerged in terror.

“O God!” I screamed, and “O God!” again and again; for there before my eyes—pale and shaken, and half fainting, and groping before him with his hands, like a man restored from death—there stood Henry Jekyll!

What he told me in the next hour, I cannot bring my mind to set on paper. I saw what I saw, I heard what I heard, and my soul sickened at it; and yet now when that sight has faded from my eyes, I ask myself if I believe it, and I cannot answer. My life is shaken to its roots; sleep has left me; the deadliest terror sits by me at all hours of the day and night; and I feel that my days are numbered, and that I must die; and yet I shall die incredulous. As for the moral turpitude that man unveiled to me, even with tears of penitence, I cannot, even in memory, dwell on it without a start of horror. I will say but one thing, Utterson, and that (if you can bring your mind to credit it) will be more than enough. The creature who crept into my house that night was, on Jekyll’s own confession, known by the name of Hyde and hunted for in every corner of the land as the murderer of Carew.

## MCQ Questions

| **#** | **Type** | **Question** | **Results** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | **M: 71%**  Understanding  I put him back, conscious at his touch of a certain icy pang along my blood.  the horror I had of my visitor, | Why does Dr. Lanyon initially think of the man?   1. He doesn’t think anything of him 2. He thinks the man is too forward 3. He is conscious of the man’s touch 4. **He is disgusted by the man** | | **Student** | **Correct** | | --- | --- | |  |  | |  |  | |  |  | |  |  | |  |  | |  |  | |
| 2 | **E: 86%**  Vocabulary in Context  and sat down myself in my customary seat | What is a synonym for “customary” (line X)?   1. **Usual** 2. Welcomed 3. Regulated 4. Obscene |  |
| 3 | **E: 100%**  understanding  with as fair an imitation of my ordinary manner to a patient, as the lateness of the hour, the nature of my preoccupations, and the horror I had of my visitor, would suffer me to muster. | How does Dr. Lanyon sit in the chair?   1. He sits comfortably and is able to view the man as a regular patient 2. He sits comfortably as he has finally completed his task and is tired 3. **He sits uncomfortably but tries his best to look normal** 4. He sits uncomfortably as it is so late and he is tired |  |
| 4 | **E: 100%**  phrases  civilly enough. | What does “civilly enough” suggest about the way the man spoke?   1. With perfect manners 2. **With sufficient politeness** 3. With a lack of engagement 4. With an adequate care |  |
| 5 | **E: 86%**  understanding  M  y impatience has shown its heels to my politeness  wrestling against the approaches of the hysteria  I took pity on my visitor’s suspense, | Which best describes the man’s (Jekyll) manner?   1. Distraught 2. Excited 3. **Restless** 4. Squalid |  |
| 15 | **T/f** | Which one of these statements is true?   1. The drawer was hidden under a sheet behind a sofa 2. **He seemed unstable after finding the drawer** 3. The narrator almost forgot where the drawer was 4. The narrator knew the drawer contained something unnatural |  |
| 6 | **E: 86%**  Undestandinng  his face was so ghastly to see that I grew alarmed both for his life and reason. | Why does Dr. Lanyon tell the man to ‘compose’ himself?   1. The man was jumping around the place and making a scene 2. The man was making too much noise 3. He was concerned about the man’s teeth as he was grinding them too hard 4. **He was concerned about the man’s sanity** |  |
| 7 | **M: 57%**  Vocabulary in context  to **effervesce** (they should know this word) audibly (so ca’t be nonise) …  the ebullition ceased and the compound changed to a dark purple | What is another word for “ebullition” (line X)?   1. Colour-changing 2. Noise 3. **Bubbling** 4. Boiling |  |
| 8 | **M: 57%**  **Fact Finding**  a new province of knowledge and new avenues to fame and power shall be laid open to you  your sight shall be blasted by a prodigy to stagger the unbelief of Satan | Which of the following does the man NOT suggest will happen if Dr. Lanyon stays to witness him drink the potion?   1. He will be a happier man 2. He will obtain greater knowledge 3. He will be given new opportunities 4. **He will stop believing in Satan** |  |
| 18 | **Inference**  Lanyon, you remember your vows: what follows is under the seal of our profession | What does the patience suggest is why the narrator cannot tell anybody about what follows after drinking the mixture?   1. **The profession does not let you spread secrets** 2. Being a doctor means you share no information 3. Doctors have to let patients do whatever they want 4. Doctors cannot tell other doctors what to do |  |
| 9 | **H: 14%**  **Inference**  you who have so long been bound to the most narrow and material views  you who have denied the virtue of transcendental medicine  you who have derided your superiors—behold!” | How does the man feel towards Dr. Lanyon?   1. **He is upset at Dr. Lanyon for his closed-minded nature and arrogance.** 2. He derides Dr. Lanyon because he doesn’t believe in science. 3. He is respectful of Dr. Lanyon for choosing to stay and watch 4. He is enamored by Dr. Lanyon because he is intelligent and well-respected |  |
| 10 | **M: 57%**  **Effect**  A cry followed; he reeled, staggered, clutched at the table and held on, staring with injected eyes, gasping with open mouth; | Why does the writer use so many verbs in lines 50-51?   1. **To make it more vivid** 2. To make it more realistic 3. To make it longer 4. To highlight how good Dr. Lanyon’s memory is |  |
| 11 | **H: 0%**  Techniques  my mind submerged in terror. | “My mind submerged in terror.”  What language device is used here?   1. Personification 2. Hyperbole 3. **Metaphor** 4. Dissonance |  |
| 12 | **H: 29%**  My life is shaken to its roots; sleep has left me; the deadliest terror sits by me at all hours of the day and night; and I feel that my days are numbered,  and I feel that my days are numbered, and that I must die; and yet I shall die incredulous. | Why does Dr. Lanyon say, “I must die; and yet I shall die incredulous” (line X)?   1. He believes he must die but doesn’t want to. 2. He believes that Henry Jekyll will kill him now that he knows the truth. 3. He doesn’t believe what he saw was real and knows it will come and kill him. 4. **He doesn’t believe what happened and will die from disbelief.** |  |
| 13 | **Phrases** | What best explains what ‘shown its heels to’ mean?   1. **To leave behind** 2. To forget about 3. To not use 4. To kick | You see someone’s heels when they are getting away from you. |
| 14 | **Inference** | Why does the narrator interrupt the patient towards the end of the second paragraph?   1. He was rude and could not wait for the patient to finish 2. **He was eager to learn the truth and saw the patient was struggling** 3. He was eager to find out because it was late in the night and wanted to hurry to bed 4. The approaching urgency of the moment meant he had to rush |  |
| 19 | **Phrases** | “I cannot bring my mind to set on paper.” What does this mean?   1. The narrator cannot remember what happened so cannot write about it 2. The narrator does not want to write down what happened because so much happened 3. **The narrator does not want to remember and relive the horrible events** 4. The narrator wants Henry Jekyll to write it down on paper | I cannot bring my mind to set on paper. I saw what I saw; I heard what I heard, and my soul sickened at it. |
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