

Solitude

The fact is, I'm all here--head, hands, legs, and all the rest of it, but it happens I'm **invisible**.

Why couldn't they leave me **alone**?

Lucky it was I lived **alone** and untended in my room.

I am just an ordinary man--a man you have known--made **invisible**.

There a man might always be **invisible**--and yet live.

I thought I was killing myself and I did not care.

And **I** beheld, unclouded by doubt, a magnificent vision of all that invisibility might mean to a man--the mystery, the power, the freedom.

I remember walking back to the empty house, through the place that had once been a village and was now patched and tinkered by the jerry builders into the ugly likeness of a town.

I sprang to my feet and as noiselessly as possible began to detach the connections of my apparatus, and to distribute it about the room, so as to destroy the suggestions of its arrangement.

I had merely to fling aside my garments and vanish.

And no laughing matter to them as had the doing for him, as **I** had--my sister being took up with her little ones so much.

A nautical term, referring to his getting back out of the room, **I** suppose.

I staggered out of the way of the cab, avoided a perambulator by a convulsive movement, and found myself behind the hansom.

I clean lost my temper, the fools!

And then **I** had a brilliant idea.

I don't of course mean here in this place, I mean hereabouts.

But how can **I** sleep?

I found I had caught a fresh cold, and had to turn out after a time lest my sneezes should attract attention.

I did not feel then that I was lonely, that I had come out from the world into a desolate place.

It was late at night--in the daytime one was bothered with the gaping, silly students--and **I** worked then sometimes till dawn.

My last thoughts before sleeping were the most agreeable **I** had had since the change.

Outside the day was bright--by contrast with the brown shadows of the dismal house in which **I** found myself, dazzlingly bright.

I did not know how long it would be before I should become visible from that cause also.

It's wild--but **I** suppose I may drink.

I saw in time a blind man approaching me, and fled limping, for I feared his subtle intuitions.

Dodge as **I** like.

But **I** lay there like grim death.

It was dark, and **I** had the devil of a hunt after matches, which I found at last in the drawer of the little cash desk.

I tried to go out noiselessly.

I must sleep soon.

I slammed and locked the door and sat down quivering.

I contrived to enter, and walking down the shop--it was a department where they were selling ribbons and gloves and stockings and that kind of thing--came to a more spacious region devoted to picnic baskets and wicker furniture.

I say!

They ran in the direction of my lodging, and looking back down a street **I** saw a mass of black smoke streaming up above the roofs and telephone wires.

Then, as recollection came back to me, **I** heard voices in conversation.

The place was already lit up and agreeably warm, and **I** decided to remain where I was, keeping a cautious eye on the two or three sets of shopmen and customers who were meandering through the place, until closing time came. I'll stop where **I** am.

But this is the insanest thing **I** ever was in, in my life!

I began a systematic search of the place.

I was half minded to hit his silly countenance, but I arrested my doubled fist.

What a fool **I** was!

I had a little trouble finding it again.

Lucky it was **I** lived alone and untended in my room.

He had left the house door open and **I** slipped into the inner room.

I stood hesitating.

I scrambled to my feet, looking about me for some way of escape, and even as I did so the sound of my movement made them aware of me.

Then **I** should be able, I thought, to rob the place for food and clothing, and disguised, prowl through it and examine its resources, perhaps sleep on some of the bedding.

Finally **I** chose a mask of the better type, slightly grotesque but not more so than many human beings, dark glasses, greyish whiskers, and a wig.

I thought my troubles were over.

He must get food every day--and **I** don't envy him.

But **I** did not follow him.

Whatever **I** did, whatever the consequences might be, was nothing to me.
Then **I** slipped up again with a box of matches, fired my heap of paper and rubbish, put the chairs and bedding thereby, led the gas to the affair, by means of an india-rubber tube, and waving a farewell to the room left it for the last time.
I heard him come shuffling up to my floor, hesitate, and go down.
I heard someone shouting.
And **I** gave her butter to get her to wash.
At first **I** was as incapable as a swathed infant--stepping with limbs **I** could not see.
I resolved to explore the house, and spent some time in doing so as noiselessly as possible.
Then **I** went into the refreshment-room, drank a little milk **I** found there, and sat down by the fire to consider my position.
I suppose they saw merely a figure moving quietly and quickly away.
I processed her.
Am **I** drunk?
I suppose it went out at last.

Multitude

Might **I ask** you a question or two?
You said that you were only my banker, and bankers never **ask** questions, you know.
The state-room was next the cabin, and we flocked in there and flopped down on the settees, all **speaking** together, for we were just mad with the feeling that we were free once more.
Again and again **I** had to **ask** him whether he would give in and sign the documents.
You will find it rather disconnected, **I** fear, and there may prove to be little relation between the different incidents of which **I speak**.
He chuckled to himself as he **spoke**, his eyes twinkled, and he seemed a different man to the sombre thinker of the previous night.
We turned a corner in the lane as he **spoke**, and there was the building close beside us.
I think that if you knew all that **I** had in this box you would **ask** me to pull some out instead of putting others in.
If you were **asked** to wear any dress which we might give you, you would not object to our little whim.
I do not know where **I** was, nor whom **I spoke** with, nor anything save what **I** have told you.
But if you have why, then, how could any gentleman **ask** you to condescend to accept anything under the three figures?
She raised her veil as she **spoke**, and we could see that she was indeed in a pitiable state of agitation, her face all drawn and grey, with restless frightened eyes, like those of some hunted animal.
As he **spoke** he drew the dog-whip swiftly from the dead man's lap, and throwing the noose round the reptile's neck he drew it from its horrid perch and, carrying it at arm's length, threw it into the iron safe, which he closed upon it.
I must really **ask** you to be a little more quiet! It really would be a good thing that we should all go over the house **together** and make certain that this rather erratic burglar did not, after all, carry anything away with him.
There was one thing in the case which had made the deepest impression **both** upon the servants and the police.
It was easy to see that she was passionately devoted **both** to her husband and to her little son.
Here we dismissed our cab, and made our way up the drive **together**.
Again, **both** father and son agreed as to the place where the man escaped into the road.
We went upstairs **together**, the colonel first with the lamp, the fat manager and **I** behind him.
Surprise and satisfaction were **both** for an instant to be read upon his eager face, though when she glanced round to find out the cause of his silence he had become as demure as ever.

Empathy

I vs He

He was in the midst of his exposition when the door from the corridor opened slowly and without noise.
He took me for his housemaid!
He sat down and began to cry again.
I can't believe THAT!
I do not know how long **I** sat peering down that well.
He took up his pipe, and began, in his old accustomed manner, to tap with it nervously upon the bars of the grate.
He tried the little golden key in the lock, and to him great delight, it fitted!
He came into the hall with us and helped the Editor on with his coat.
He had just succeeded in curving it down into a graceful zigzag and was going to dive in among the leaves, when a sharp hiss made him draw back in a hurry--a large pigeon had flown into him face and was beating him violently with its wings.
He ought to know him way to the ticket-office, even if he doesn't know him alphabet!
And you won't hurt me, though **I AM** an insect.
I like them when they can talk,' Alice said.
I had in mind a battering ram.
I looked about me to see if any traces of animal life remained.

I had to think rapidly what to do.
And **I** invite YOU.
He looked at the Medical Man.

I or He vs I and He

Asked me, in fact, if **I** had come from the sun in a thunderstorm and **He** was dressed in tin armour, which seemed to fit him very badly, and he had a queer-shaped little deal box fastened across his shoulder, upside-down, and with the lid hanging open.

May **I** put your shawl straight for you and **He** lit one and spoke over his pipe, puffing.

It was, as **I** think I have said, of bronze and **He** stopped, held out his glass for more, and took it off at a draught.

He went on repeating, all the time that **I** was getting him on his feet again.

I suppose it was the unexpected nature of my loss that maddened me and **He** took down a jar from one of the shelves as he passed.

I can't remember things before they happen.

I said to myself, as well as she could for sneezing.

He looked across at the Editor, who was a rare visitor, and hoped he was all right.

I opened the door and went in and **He** did his very best to make The billows smooth and bright--And this was odd, because it was The middle of the night.

But **I** was so horribly alone, and even to clamber down into the darkness of the well appalled me and **He** CALLED it a helmet, though it certainly looked much more like a saucepan.

I do hope it'll make me grow large again, for, really, I'm quite tired of being such a tiny little thing!

I wasted some time in futile questionings, conveyed, as well as I was able, to such of the little people as came by

and **He** carried the pepper-box in him hand and the people near the door began sneezing all at once.

And that's the way **I** get my bread-- A trifle, if you please.

He was so hoarse that **I** could scarcely hear him and **He** can go up against gravitation in a balloon, and why should he not hope that ultimately he may be able to stop or accelerate his drift along the Time-Dimension, or even turn about and travel the other way?

I looked about me to see if any traces of animal life remained and **He** came straight up to me and laughed into my eyes.

Said **I** loudly.

I opened the door and went in and **He** did his very best to make The billows smooth and bright--And this was odd, because it was The middle of the night.

I said, turning suddenly on the White Queen, for she didn't like being found fault with so much.

Death

Tell me what new scene of **death** has been acted, and whose murder I am now to lament?

Renew life where **death** had apparently devoted the body to corruption.

Shall I, in cool blood, set loose upon the earth a daemon, whose delight is in **death** and wretchedness?

I felt as if I had placed carefully, one by one, in my view those instruments which were to be afterwards used in putting me to a slow and cruel **death**.

Persecuted and tortured as I am and have been, can **death** be any evil to me?

But the conviction of what was coming was on me, as I have read of men who have heard the **death**-watch.

My beloved sister, the sickening failing of your heart-felt expectations is, in prospect, more terrible to me than my own **death**.

I knew--as I knew--that it was a stand-up fight with **death**, and in a pause told me so.

Here was a poor girl putting aside the terrors which I naturally had of **death** to go watch alone by the bier of the mistress whom I loved, so that the poor clay might not be lonely till laid to eternal rest.

I died.