

# Solitude

Silence came upon the place, and I found myself wandering through the vast and intricate shops, galleries, show-rooms of the place, **alone**.

I is **invisible**!

I stopped the gas engine, felt for and stroked the beast, which was still insensible, and then, being tired, left it sleeping on the **invisible** pillow and went to bed.

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

I asked, holding the **invisible** arm.

I'm an **invisible** man.

One could make it **invisible**!

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

I am a fairly strong man, and I have the poker handy--besides being **invisible**.

I ran with wide strides, and wherever a patch of rough ground intervened, wherever there came a patch of raw flints, or a bit of broken glass shone dazzling, I crossed it and left the bare **invisible** feet that followed to take what line they would.

'I could be **invisible**! I struggled up. I had burnt my boats--if ever a man did! I processed her. And I had hardly worked and thought about the matter six months before light came through one of the meshes suddenly--blindingly! I made convulsive struggles and awoke. By not looking down, however, I managed to walk on the level passably well. What do I make by it? , when I heard a clashing concussion and was hit violently behind, and turning saw a man carrying a basket of soda-water syphons, and looking in amazement at his burden. I have wasted strength, time, opportunities. I will try. I went to bury him. 'Certainly,' I said. I never saw any more of it. He held it out to me, saw something odd about my hands, I expect, and lifted his eyes to my face. At last I opened the window and made a bustle. I simply would not publish, and let him share my credit. I took some brandy and water, and then went up past my impromptu bag--he was lying quite still--to the room containing the old clothes. I became insensible and woke languid in the darkness. I do not know how they settled the business. Of restoring what I have done. But--I say! I let the whole down with a smash on the cabman, and then, with shouts and the clatter of feet about me, people coming out of shops, vehicles pulling up, I realised what I had done for myself, and cursing my folly, backed against a shop window and prepared to dodge out of the confusion. Then far down the place, in the brighter light of some department which had already raised its blinds, I saw two men approaching. I had no refuge, no appliances, no human being in the world in whom I could confide. What on earth ought I to do? I tried to catch it, with an idea of putting it out of the window, but it wouldn't be caught, it vanished. But I am worn out. Can't use 'em as I can see. I went down into the warehouse to see if there was any chance of packing and addressing a parcel, but I could not understand the system of checking. I shall never forget that dawn, and the strange horror of seeing that my hands had become as clouded glass, and watching them grow clearer and thinner as the day went by, until at last I could see the sickly disorder of my room through them, though I closed my transparent eyelids. I did not expect to find it occupied, and I expected to find, in addition to my books of memoranda, an outfit of clothing. because I saw a crowd round the place, trying to see whence the miaowing came. My nose had been a difficulty indeed--I had thought of paint. I should have killed him! I must sleep soon. At last, faint with the desire for tasteful food, I went into another place and demanded a private room. I did not know how long it would be before I should become visible from that cause also. 'Did I hear a cat? Then I heard heavy feet striding across a room, and a man appeared down the shop. I found myself in my bedstead storeroom again, and at the end of a wilderness of wardrobes. But I did not follow him. Nor have I heard what became of him. But I made her comfortable on the pillow of my truckle-bed. 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. But I might--out of sheer funk and misery. 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 slept during the forenoon, pulling the sheet over my eyes to shut out the light, and about midday I was awakened again by a knocking.

# Multitude

' He **spoke** in a nervous, jerky fashion, and with little giggling laughs in between, but somehow he impressed me with fear more than the other.

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.

We turned a corner in the lane as he **spoke**, and there was the building close beside us.

He had hardly **spoken** before there rushed into the room one of the most lovely young women that I have ever seen in my life.

' I **asked**, after we had cordially shaken hands.

Twice my boy has **asked** her to marry him, for he loves her devotedly, but each time she has refused him.

The public not unnaturally goes on the principle that he who would heal others must himself be whole, and looks **askance** at the curative powers of the man whose own case is beyond the reach of his drugs.

You must **speak** to her in the morning, or I will if you prefer it.

I refused, as you can imagine, and **asked** my father how he could allow such a wretch to take such liberties with himself and his household.

I do not know where I was, nor whom I **spoke** with, nor anything save what I have told you.

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. As he **spoke** we came round the curve of the avenue, and saw in the fading light that every blind in the house had been drawn down. Might I **ask** you a question or two? I **ask** you now, is such a theory tenable? I think I must **ask** you to remain sitting exactly where you are. I had already noticed the peculiarities of the typewriter, and I wrote to the man himself at his business address **asking** him if he would come here. Your sister **asked** for it, I suppose? We shall know if you **speak** of this,' said he. but I have had a very strange experience, and as I have no parents or relations of any sort from whom I could **ask** advice, I thought that perhaps you would be kind enough to tell me what I should do. You **speak** to your mate upon the left to-night, and see if he is to be trusted. ' I **asked** as she entered.

Indeed, it was almost mesmeric, the effect which this giggling ruffian had produced upon the unfortunate linguist, for he could not **speak** of him save with trembling hands and a blanched cheek. The Inspector and I have made quite a little reconnaissance **together**. As you **both** locked your doors at night, your rooms were unapproachable from that side. Her brother, however, had joined us and we set off all four **together**. You see all these isolated facts, **together** with many minor ones, all pointed in the same direction. Then, suddenly springing to his feet, he beat his head against the wall with such force that we **both** rushed upon him and tore him away to the centre of the room. I wonder, since you are **both** maiden ladies, that you do not keep house together. With that he seized my hair in **both** his hands, and tugged until I yelled with the pain. He seemed quite enthusiastic and rubbed his hands **together** in the most genial fashion. Pull yourself **together**! With a comical pomposity of manner he bowed solemnly to **both** of us and strode off upon his way. We went upstairs **together**, the colonel first with the lamp, the fat manager and I behind him. You are two friends of mine who are in want of a billet, and what could be more natural than that I should bring you **both** round to the managing director? Rucastle were **both** downstairs, and the child was with them, so that I had an admirable opportunity. Of all the facts which were presented to us we had to pick just those which we deemed to be essential, and then piece them **together** in their order, so as to reconstruct this very remarkable chain of events. The two mates had **both** been seized by the crew, and the whole business seemed to be settled. I laid the two tresses **together**, and I assure you that they were identical. You will find it laid out upon the bed in your room, and if you would be so good as to put it on we should **both** be extremely obliged. The poor girl, however, was herself a prisoner, for there was no one about the house except the man who acted as coachman, and his wife, **both** of whom were tools of the conspirators. When he was sober he used to be fond of playing backgammon and draughts with me, and he would make me his representative **both** with the servants and with the tradespeople, so that by the time that I was sixteen I was quite master of the house. The two sat down **together** in the bow-window of the club. He chuckled to himself and rubbed his long, nervous hands **together**.

## Empathy

### I vs She

**She** took up the lamp, and, in an absolute silence, we returned to the smoking-room. **She** looked across at the Editor, who was a rare visitor, and hoped she was all right. **I** shared a cab with the Editor. **She** was in the midst of her exposition when the door from the corridor opened slowly and without noise. At times **I** missed tobacco frightfully! A baby, **I** think, could have caught it. This young lady loves you with an H,' the King said, introducing **I** in the hope of turning off the Messenger's attention from himself--but it was no use--the Anglo-Saxon attitudes only got more extraordinary every moment, while the great eyes rolled wildly from side to side. **She** ought to know her way to the ticket-office, even if she doesn't know her alphabet! **She** did her very best to make The billows smooth and bright--And this was odd, because it was The middle of the night. **I** lost no time in stanching the blood, but jumped up and ran on, with a warm trickle down my cheek and chin. **She** seemed to have fainted. **I** told myself that I could never stop, and with a gust of petulance I resolved to stop forthwith. **I** cried aloud, and none answered. **She** hesitated. And at the end of FIVE, **I** shall go! ' **She** was now working with fourteen pairs at once, and Alice couldn't help looking at her in great astonishment. **She** thought she had never seen such a strange-looking soldier in all her life. I don't know,' **I** said doubtfully. **I** want to tell it. **I** do hope it'll make me grow large again, for, really, I'm quite tired of being such a tiny little thing! **I** carefully released the brush, and did her best to get the hair into order. **She** found herself in a long, low hall, which was lit up by a row of lamps hanging from the roof. There was no way of guessing, but she was gone, and **I** began to remember that she was a Pawn, and that it would

soon be time for her to move.

**She** CALLED it a helmet, though it certainly looked much more like a saucepan.

**She** had a right to be a LITTLE annoyed with the Queen, for she was covered with ashes from head to foot.

There were other signs of removal about, with queer narrow footprints like those **I** could imagine made by a sloth.

**She** had a right to be a LITTLE annoyed with the Queen, for she was covered with ashes from head to foot.

**I** interrupted.

For **I** never was so small as this before, never!

**She** had nothing on them but a pair of tattered, blood-stained socks.

## **I or She vs I and She**

Ye-es, pretty well--SOME poetry,' **I** said doubtfully and **She** thought she had never seen such a strange-looking soldier in all her life.

She was out of the room in a moment, and ran down stairs--or, at least, it wasn't exactly running, but a new invention of hers for getting down stairs quickly and easily, as **I** said to myself.

Then **I** sniffed good wholesome meat, and opened the door on you.

Now, **I** saw the fact plainly enough.

If only **I** had thought of a Kodak! and **She** was dressed in ordinary evening clothes, and nothing save her haggard look remained of the change that had startled me.

**I** could not see how things were kept going and **She** had nothing on them but a pair of tattered, blood-stained socks.

So that **I** was lame and **She** took me for her housemaid!

**I** can see all of it when **I** get upon a chair--all but the bit behind the fireplace.

**I** don't QUITE know yet,' **I** said, very gently.

It was, as **I** think **I** have said, of bronze and ' **She** chortled in her joy.

**I** wonder **I** never thought of that before--But **I** can't stay there long and **She** went in without knocking and hurried upstairs, in great fear lest she should meet the real Mary Ann and be turned out of the house before she had found the fan and gloves.

It continued, turning to **I** as it spoke and **She** gave a whoop of dismay, staggered a little way, and fell down.

**I** hesitated.

But now, with my growing knowledge, **I** felt very differently towards those bronze doors.

As cheerfully as **I** could and **She** tucked her arm affectionately into Alice's and they walked off together.

Only forty times had that silent revolution occurred during all the years that **I** had traversed and **She** came into the hall with us and helped the Editor on with her coat.

And just now, as **I** said, she was hard at work on the white kitten, which was lying quite still and trying to purr--no doubt feeling that it was all meant for its good and **She** smiled quietly, in her old way.

Some **I** recognised as a kind of hypertrophied raspberry and orange, but for the most part they were strange and **She** was exactly like a child.

As **I** stood there musing over this too perfect triumph of man, the full moon, yellow and gibbous, came up out of an overflow of silver light in the north-east and **She** was delighted to find that her neck would bend about easily in any direction, like a serpent.

Oh, **I** beg your pardon!

While **I** hesitated, among the black bushes behind us, and dim against their blackness, **I** saw three crouching figures.

When **I** reached the lawn my worst fears were realised and of all the unsatisfactory people **I** EVER met--' **She** never finished the sentence, for at this moment a heavy crash shook the forest from end to end.

**I** saw huge buildings rise up faint and fair, and pass like dreams and ' **She** looked so vexed at the idea, that Alice changed the subject hastily.

As **I** stood there musing over this too perfect triumph of man, the full moon, yellow and gibbous, came up out of an overflow of silver light in the north-east and **She** was delighted to find that her neck would bend about easily in any direction, like a serpent.

What, then you don't--' the little voice began, when it was drowned by a shrill scream from the engine, and everybody jumped up in alarm, **I** among the rest.

The rabbit-hole went straight on like a tunnel for some way and then dipped suddenly down, so suddenly that **I** had not a moment to think about stopping myself before she found myself falling down what seemed to be a very deep well.

**I** looked at it with great curiosity.

**I** might have slept there, and the whole thing have been a dream and **She** went on growing and growing and very soon she had to kneel down on the floor.

That we've had enough of that subject, and it would be just as well if you'd mention what you mean to do next, as **I** suppose you don't mean to stop here all the rest of your life and **She** always seemed to me, **I** fancy, more human than she was, perhaps because her affection was so human.

It may seem odd to you, but it was two days before **I** could follow up the new-found clue in what was manifestly the proper way and **She** was a little startled, however, when she heard the voice of the Duchess close to her ear.

## **Death**

But **I** feel myself justified in desiring the **death** of my adversary.

I was **deathly** pale, just like a waxen image, and the red eyes glared with the horrible vindictive look which I knew too well.

I confided to me that I has got her **death**-warrant.

Hawkins's **death**.

There was a wilderness of beautiful white flowers, and **death** was made as little repulsive as might be.

One day, while I was gradually recovering, I was seated in a chair, my eyes half open, and my cheeks livid like those in **death**.

It is like **death**!

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**.

At the bottom there was a dark, tunnel-like passage, through which came a **deathly**, sickly odour, the odour of old earth newly turned.

This is no jest, but life and **death**, perhaps more.

But to fail here, is not mere life or **death**.

Was it indeed a house of **death** to which I had come, too late?

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

It was as if the blood, no longer needed for the working of the heart, had gone to make the harshness of **death** as little rude as might be.

And on it I will consecrate myself, in life or **death**, to the happiness of my cousin.

Murdered my brother, also in myhellish sport have betrayed the innocent to **death** and ignominy?

I was overcome by gloom and misery, and often reflected I had better seek **death** than desire to remain in a world which to me was replete with wretchedness.

This **death** will carry despair to me, and a thousand other miseries shall torment and destroy me.

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

No word, no expression could body forth the kind of relation in which I stood to me--my more than sister, since till **death** I was to be mine only.

To examine the causes of life, we must first have recourse to **death**.

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

**I died.**