Nathan Brooks

“Ed Gein”

The author of the article “Edward Theodore Gein – Graveyard Goul” (Brian Innes) explains a horrific situation in Plainfield, Wisconsin. It describes the scene the police found when they went to Ed Gein’s house after they suspected him of a murder.

They found horrifying things in his dwelling, human remains used as tools, skulls used as bowls, human skin used to make things (an apron, leggings, a chair back, a drum, and a knife sheath), and a basement that looked like a slaughter house with body parts adorned on hooks and blood all over the floor.

Gein got most of his materials from grave robbing but the thrill of this act seemed to be fading, so he turned to the living. He admitted to thinking about amputating his own penis multiple times, and how he leathered these new skins so he could wear them while he went out dancing in the moonlight.

Jack the Ripper and Ed Gein have some interesting similarities and some aspects that set them apart from each other. They both had a fixation on the anatomy of their opposite sex. Jack the Ripper picked his victims on the fact that they sold sex. A possible motives was that he had a problem with their sexual jobs, maybe because he was unable to have sex, or that his wife cheated on him and his kills were anger driven. Either way, he was punishing women for being women and focused his gore at what made them women. Ed Gein seemed to not want to be a man, so he preyed on women to get materials for his new persona.

Both Jack the Ripper and Ed Gein kept little pieces of their victim’s bodies. Jack cut out a woman’s heart, uterus, kidneys, and removed breasts. Ed Gein had a human heart in a pan on the stove, lips hung on a string, used real breasts on his apron, and had other body parts around the house.

There were some significant differences as well, like how Jack the Ripper toyed with the police by sending in taunting letters and pieces of his victims, while Ed Gein kept quiet about his killings. Jack was comfortable doing his work in the open, leaving his bodies to be found, Gein took his work home with him. Jack was never caught or identified, Gein was convicted.

Both of these killers were immortalized into legends, a lingering fear of what neighbors are capable of was left in their wake.

Innes, Brian. “Edward Theodore Gein – Graveyard Goul”. *Serial Killers:* *The Stories of History's 50 Evilest Murderers*. Book. November 30, 2006.