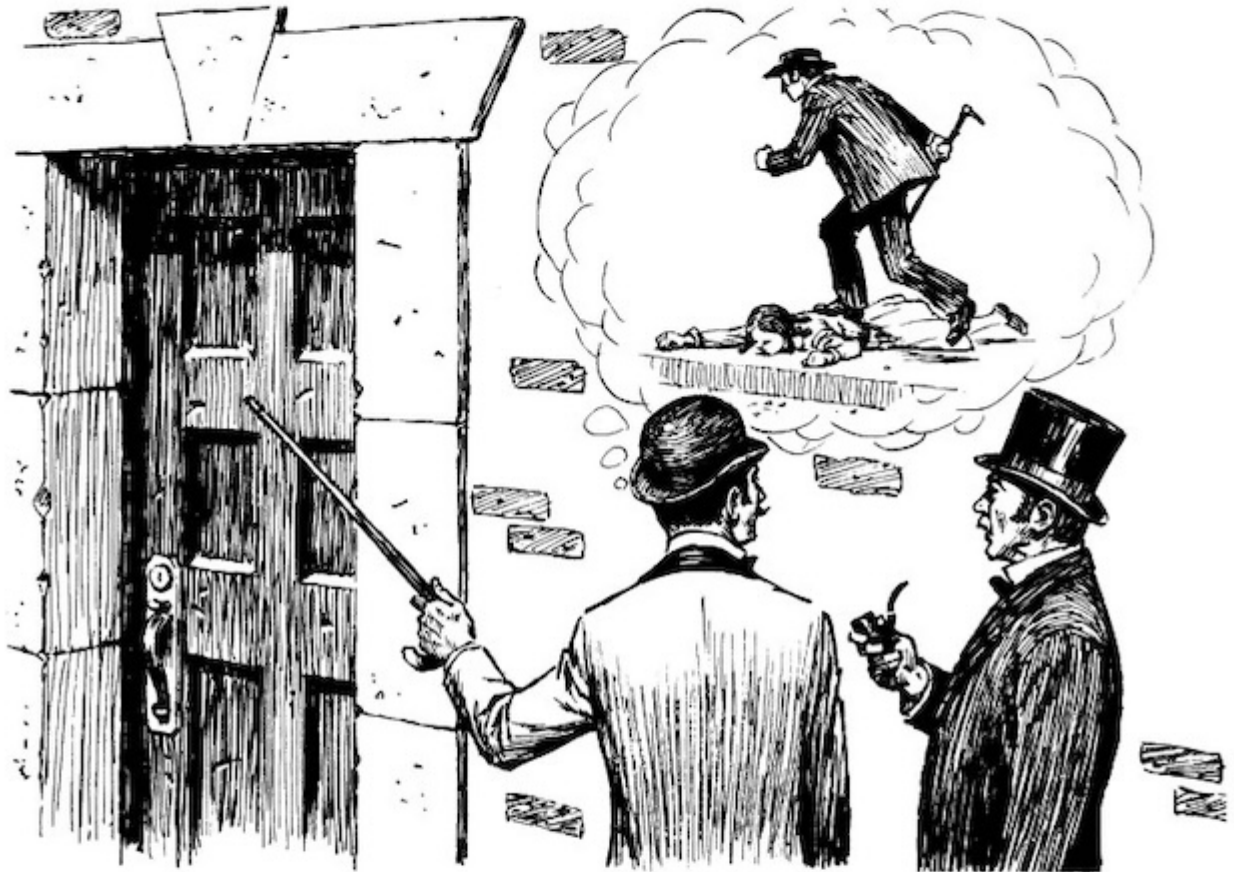


# THE STORY OF THE STRANGE BUILDING



*Mr. Enfield told Mr. Utterson what he had seen on that frightful night.*

- Preview:**
1. Read the name of the story.
  2. Look at the picture.
  3. Read the sentence under the picture.
  4. Read the first two paragraphs of the story.
  5. Then answer the following question.

You learned from your preview that

- a. Mr. Enfield likes to tell stories.
- b. Mr. Utterson and Mr. Enfield enjoy walking together.
- c. the shops sell many items of interest to Utterson.
- d. the two men like to play ball.

*Turn to the Comprehension Check on page 10 for the right answer.*

**Now read the story.**

Read to find out how Mr. Utterson feels about Enfield's tale.

# THE STORY OF THE STRANGE BUILDING

Mr. Utterson, the lawyer, led a quiet life. He did not go to parties or to shows. He liked quiet dinners and walks. Most of all, he liked walking through London with his friend Mr. Enfield. On one of these walks, their way led them down a by-street in a busy part of London.

The street was small and quiet now, but its shops did a great business on the weekdays. All the shop fronts were pleasant and gay. The houses were clean and brightly colored. Laughing children were throwing a ball, and smiling people nodded in greeting to the two men.

Further along the street, Mr. Utterson and Mr. Enfield came upon a strange building. It was very different from the others. It was the color of charcoal and had no windows, only an old, worn door.

Mr. Enfield stopped, lifted up his cane, and pointed. "Did you ever take notice of that door?" he asked Utterson. Mr. Utterson nodded that he had. Mr. Enfield was quiet for a minute, then spoke again. "That property brings to mind a very unusual story."

"Indeed?" asked Mr. Utterson. "And what is that?"

"Well, it was this way," returned Mr. Enfield: "One late night I was walking down this very street. The street was empty. The air had turned as cold as a refrigerator. A few poor people were rubbing their hands over a small charcoal fire. All at once, I saw two figures. A little man was walking eastward, and a small girl was running down a cross street. At the corner, the two ran into one another.

"The man walked calmly over the child's fallen body and left

her screaming on the ground. He was a terrible thing, not like a man at all.

"I took to my heels, caught the man and brought him back to where an angry group had gathered. He was perfectly calm and did not struggle, but he gave me such a mean look that I began to sweat. Then, as if the whole business did not interest him, he put his hand over his mouth to cover a yawn.

"Soon, the doctor arrived. We were glad to hear that the child was more scared than hurt. But that was not the end of it. We all wanted to kill that man. Since killing was out of the question, we did the next best thing. We told him that we would spread this story throughout London. He certainly would lose any friends or business he had. All this time we were trying to keep the angry women off him; they would have torn him apart.

"The man's face broke into an ugly, twisted smile. One could see that his heart was as dark and cold as a refrigerator. 'If you want to make a big deal of this accident,' he said, 'I am helpless. Any gentleman wishes to avoid such a scene,' says he. 'Name your figure.'"

"We got him up to one hundred pounds for the child's family. The next thing was to collect the money. And where do you think he took us, but to that very building!"

Mr. Enfield was again pointing at the dreadful property.

"The man whipped out a key and seemed to vanish through that old door. Then he returned with a check. But the check was signed with the name of a well-known person that I cannot say."

Mr. Utterson's eyebrows raised with interest. "I pointed out to the man that, in real life, a person does not just vanish into a deserted building late at night and return with another man's check." Mr. Enfield paused. "But he just yawned again and sneered. 'I will stay with you till the banks open and cash the check myself,' he said.

"The next day, we all went to the bank. I gave in the check and, sure enough, it was good.

"There was something so horrifying about that man: I still don't know what it was. Yet a fine person had signed the check. It was a friend of yours, whose name I will not say. I think this man may know a bad story about your friend's life. And perhaps he promises not to give out this information unless he is paid."

"Do you have any more information about that building?" asked Mr. Utterson.

"No, but it does not seem to be a house," continued Mr. Enfield. "Anyway, I have made up my mind to ask nothing more. It may make things worse."

"I agree," said Mr. Utterson. "But there's one point I want to ask: I want to ask the name of the man who walked over the child."

Mr. Enfield paused. "It was a man by the name of Hyde."

"The fact is," Mr. Utterson continued, "your story has come home. I know the name of the man who signed the check, and I think we have already spoken too much. Let's agree to never speak of this again."

The two men shook hands on their bargain.

# THE STORY OF THE STRANGE BUILDING

## COMPREHENSION CHECK

### Preview Answer:

b. Mr. Enfield and Mr. Utterson enjoy walking together.

### Choose the best answer.

1. Mr. Utterson was
  - a. an exciting friend.
  - b. very dull.
  - c. a peaceful man.
  - d. full of stories.
  
2. The strange building
  - a. did not seem to belong there.
  - b. was the office of a lawyer.
  - c. was the key to an unusual story.
  - d. had a very fancy doorway.
  
3. The man and the girl in Enfield's story
  - a. fought with each other.
  - b. collided with each other at the corner.
  - c. were both walking east.
  - d. stopped to talk for a while at the corner.
  
4. First, the man walked over the little girl. Then Mr. Enfield chased after him. Next,
  - a. the women tore the man apart out of anger.
  - b. Mr. Enfield brought the man back to the group.
  - c. the doctor arrived on the scene.
  - d. the man gave the family a check.
  
5. According to the story, which of the following statements is *not* true?
  - a. the man showed little interest in the accident.
  - b. the townspeople were angry at what had happened.
  - c. everyone wanted to send the man away.
  - d. the man went into the strange building.
  
6. Mr. Enfield believes that Mr. Hyde
  - a. will lose all his friends.
  - b. is cruel and cold-hearted.
  - c. has lots of money.
  - d. lives in the strange building.
  
7. Mr. Utterson was particularly interested in knowing
  - a. the name of the cold-hearted man.
  - b. how the man got into the building.
  - c. which bank cashed the check.
  - d. why Mr. Enfield stayed with the man.
  
8. The two men
  - a. were disturbed by the strange happening.
  - b. would never walk together again.
  - c. thought the police should have been called.
  - d. were not surprised at what had happened.
  
9. Another name for this story could be
  - a. "A Cruel Man."
  - b. "A Walk In London."
  - c. "An Accident At A Corner."
  - d. "Mr. Enfield's Story."
  
10. This selection is mainly about
  - a. buying things at a London market.
  - b. cashing a check at the bank.
  - c. a friend in trouble.
  - d. the telling of a strange happening.

Check your answers with the key on page 67.