

The Story of the Door

Mr Utterson was a lawyer*. He was a man who never smiled. He said little and was very shy. He was tall, thin and dull* – but people seemed to like him. Although he rarely spoke kind words, there was kindness in his eyes and his actions. He was hard with himself, but he did not judge* the actions of others. He was often the last good influence in the lives of men who were going bad. He had few friends. The ones he had were either relations or people he had known for a long time.

One of Mr Utterson's few very good friends was Mr Enfield, a distant cousin. Mr Enfield was quite different from Mr Utterson – he was young and enjoyed the good life of parties, theatre, fine restaurants. Other people could not understand why these two liked each other, but they did. Every Sunday the cousins went for a walk. When people saw them, they noticed that the two men rarely spoke, that they looked bored and that they always seemed pleased to meet anyone they knew. But both men considered these walks one of the most important events of their week and refused all other Sunday invitations, whether business or pleasure.

On one of these walks the two men found themselves in a small street in a busy part of London. There were

several shops in the street and it was full of activity during the week. On Sundays, however, it was quiet.

On the left-hand side of the street going east, near the corner, there was an entrance to a courtyard*. Beside it was a tall, dark, ugly building. It was different from the other houses and shops, which were brightly painted and clean. It had no windows. The door needed painting. Old men sometimes slept in the doorway, children often played on the steps and schoolboys wrote their names on the wooden door with their pocket knives.

The cousins were on the opposite side of this street when Mr Enfield lifted his walking stick and pointed.

‘Have you ever noticed that door?’ he asked.

‘Yes, I have,’ Mr Utterson replied.

‘It reminds* me of a very strange story,’ Mr Enfield



Mr Enfield pointed at the dark, ugly building with his walking stick.