

THE INVISIBLE MAN

-H.G. Wells

Q.1 Write in about 100 words the character sketch of:

1. Mrs. Hall: Mrs. Hall is the wife of Mr. Hall and the owner of the Coach and Horses Inn. A very friendly, down-to-earth woman who enjoys socializing with her guests, Mrs. Hall is continually frustrated by the mysterious Invisible Man's refusal to talk with her, and his repeated temper tantrums. The Halls are a typical family. Mr. Hall drinks and Mrs. Hall nags him about drinking. Mr. Hall isn't so quick and Mrs. Hall takes out her frustrations on Millie, the serving girl. Mrs. Hall, although not a major character, is revealed as rather devious in a harmless sort of way. She really wants to know what the strange man's disfigurement is; she assumes he has been in a horrible accident, and the motherly side of her wants to know how to express sympathy. She is a very good innkeeper under the circumstances.

2. Mr. Teddy Henfrey:

A clock repairman who happens to visit the inn for a cup of tea. Mrs. Hall takes advantage of him to try to find out about her strange guest. She wants Teddy Henfrey to fix a clock in the stranger's room. Teddy deliberately takes as long as he can with the clock, taking it apart and re-assembling it for no reason. He tries unsuccessfully to engage the stranger in conversation. The stranger catches him wasting time, though and tells him to finish up and get out. Because the stranger will not talk, Teddy convinces himself that the man is someone of a "suspicious" nature. He begins the rumours about the man being wanted by the police and merely wrapping himself up to conceal his identity. Teddy Henfrey is a character typical of the other people of the town. He wants to know the man's story, and when he is rebuffed for his persistence, he begins to imagine all sorts of things. His imagination soon becomes fact to him, and he spreads his knowledge to anyone who will care to listen.

3. Dr. Cuss: Dr. Cuss is a doctor living in the town of Iping. Intrigued by tales of a bandaged stranger staying at the Coach and Hoses Inn, Dr. Cuss goes to see him under the pretense of asking for a donation to the nurse's fund. The strange man, Griffin, scares Cuss away by pinching his nose with his invisible hand. Cuss went immediately to see Rev. Bunting, who not surprisingly did not believe the doctor's wild story.

Later, after Griffin had been exposed as The Invisible Man, Dr. Cuss and Rev. Bunting got hold of his notebooks, but these were stolen back from them by the invisible Griffin, who took both men's clothes. Although the unlucky Rev. Bunting had all his clothing stolen by Griffin, Dr. Cuss only lost his trousers.

4. Rev. Bunting : The Rev. Bunting is the vicar in the town of Iping. Dr. Cuss want to see him following his first encounter with Griffin. Bunting laughed at Cuss' claims of an invisible hand pinching his nose, but the next night his home was burgled by the Invisible Man himself. Later, Bunting and Cuss tried to read Griffin's notes but were stopped by the Invisible Man, who stole their clothes. Although Cuss escaped missing only his trousers, Bunting had his entire wardrobe purloined.

5. Mr. Sandy Wadgers: Mr. Sandy Wadgers was the village blacksmith, who is also supposed to be an exorcist. He was the one whom people thought, the one who could deal with the ghosts and spirits. Mr & Mrs. Hall sent Millie across the street through the golden five o'clock sunshine to rouse up Mr. Sandy Wadgers, the blacksmith. He was a knowing man, and very resourceful person. He took quite a grave view of the case. "I am surprised if that is not witchcraft" was the view of Mr. Sandy Wadgers. "Do you want horseshoes for the ghosts." He came round greatly concerned. They wanted him to lead the way upstairs to the room, but he didn't seem to be in any hurry. Wadgers is joined by Huxter, and together they ponder the likelihood of witchcraft and contemplate the propriety of breaking through the door in order to examine the situation more closely. However, before they can carry out any such action, the door opens and the stranger emerges, wrapped and bundled as usual. He enters the parlour and slam the door against them. When Mr. Hall raps on the door and demands an explanation, the stranger tells him to "go to the devil "and "shut the door after you." Wadgers delays "breaking" into the room, using the excuse of propriety when the real and very human reason is fear and apprehension. While they may talk of spirits and witchcraft in their leisure, it is clear that they have no real experience with such things.

6. Griffin : The story of the Invisible Man, is the story of a protagonist Griffin, who had been a brilliant young chemist and researcher. Unfortunately, he began his road to 'decline' in college when he became extremely obsessed with his experiments, that he kept his work in a clandestine manner lest someone else claimed credit for that. His passion for pure scientific investigation accelerated to such an extent that when he required money for further research, he stole it from his father. And later, in a fit of anger and frustration, he even murdered him. The barbarous crime thus committed made rest of his crimes pale in comparison. He turns himself from scientist to fanatic when he starts focusing all his attention merely on the concept of invisibility and never ever thinks of the repercussions that may follow. He may not have had any intention initially trying the potion on himself, but the interference of his landlord and prying neighbour lady instigate him to experiment on himself. Once he becomes invisible, his life becomes miserable. At the close of the novel poetic justice is done, Griffin is seized, assaulted and killed by a mob. The invisible Man's naked, battered body gradually becomes visible as he dies.

7. Thomas Marvel: Thomas Marvel is a tramp unwittingly recruited as a scapegoat to assist the Invisible Man as his partner in the deeds causing panic. He is short, fat and a loner. He is the area tramp. Thomas Marvel carries the Invisible Man's scientific

notebooks and stolen money. Eventually Marvel grows afraid of his unseen partner and flees to Port Burdock. He also confiscates both the notebooks and the money with him where he seeks police protection. Seeing through his intentions and misgivings, the Invisible Man gets infuriated and vows to avenge Marvel, but he becomes preoccupied with hiding from the law and retaliating against Dr. Kemp, and in the process Marvel is spared. Marvel feels blessed with the stolen money and the notes of the Invisible Man. He opens his own Inn and names it 'The Invisible Man' and prospers too. The novel ends with him secretly 'marvelling' at Griffin's notes. He is indeed the man of the world who behaves as an opportunist to take advantage of his circumstances to thrive in life.

8. George Hall: George Hall, the husband of Mrs. Hall, is a simple innocent folk, assisting his wife in the Inn. Couch and Horses Inn. He is the first person in Iping to suspect the mysterious Griffin. When a dog bites Griffin and tears his glove and nips his trousers, it was George Hall who follows him to see if he was alright but he was taken aback when he saw a handless arm, waving towards him, slam the door in his face and locked.

9. Mr. Huxter: Huxter, the shop owner, sees this guy Marvel waiting outside a window of the Coach and Horses inn holding a bag. Marvel walks into inn and nervously enters the parlour. Mr. Hall shouts that this is a private room, causing Marvel to rush out in panic. He then enters the bar and steadies himself with a drink. Marvel walks outside and stands near the parlour window, appearing to smoke a pipe. However, his hands are shaking, and Mr. Huxter's suspicious are aroused. Marvel suddenly goes into the yard, and Mr. Huxter is certain he is up to something unlawful. He rushes out and finds that Marvel has taken a bundle tied in a blue tablecloth and three books. So Huxter runs after the guy, yelling "Thief!" But, before he can catch the man, something (the Invisible Man) trips Huxter and knocks him out.

10. The Old Mariner (Sailor): When Marvel had been sitting for the best part of an hour, an elderly mariner, carrying a newspaper, came out of the inn and sat down beside him. The mariner in Port Stowe has one job here, which is to tell us that the Invisible Man story is in all newspapers. Later the mariner hears another fantastic story—that of money floating along a wall in butterfly fashion. The story is true, however. The sailor thinks the story in the newspapers is believable because it comes equipped with names and details.

11. Doctor Kemp: Doctor Kemp is a scientist living in the town of Port Burdock. He is an old friend of Griffin, who comes to his house to hide after Griffin's transformation into the "Invisible Man." Kemp has a hard time accepting the fact that his friend, who he had not seen for years, suddenly appears uninvited and invisible, but eventually he overcomes his shock and sits down and talks with Griffin. Narrative-wise, Kemp then allows Griffin to relate the story of how he began his experiments, and all that happened

to him between his arrival on his old friend's doorstep and then. Kemp, realizing that Griffin is insane with power, is quick to summon Colonel Adye of the Port Burdock police. Adye fails to apprehend Griffin, who escapes and brands Kemp a traitor, vowing to kill him. Kemp's attitude is representative of the average established, self-confident, and self-sufficient individual. He sees a man in trouble, but his reaction is contemptuous instead of concern. He has heard warning cries about an Invisible Man, but clearly doesn't believe any of it. He is a man who keeps himself apart from the concerns of the general public, is buried in his work, interested only in what award it will ultimately bring him.

LONG ANSWERS TYPE QUESTIONS:

Answer the following questions in 120-150 words each:

Q.1 What kind of scientist was Griffin? Did he use his scientific discovery in the right direction or misused it? Give reasons for your answer.

Ans. The narrator uses the Invisible Man to experiment with the depth to which a person can sink when there are no social restrictions to suppress his behaviour. When Griffin's father commits suicide, he excuses it away by saying that the man was a "sentimental fool." When he takes the potion himself, he endures such pain that he "understands" why the cat howled so much in the process of becoming invisible. Nevertheless he has no compassion for the cat, for his father or for any of the people he takes advantage of in the course of trying to survive invisibility.

The plot of the story is very straightforward. It begins in third person as the narrator introduces the Invisible Man midway through his experiences. Once the man is revealed, Griffin himself takes over and tells how he began his experiments and what happened to him after he had taken the potion. At the end, the point of view once again changes to that of an objective narration.

As Griffin tells his story, one can see that his behaviour becomes increasingly reprehensible. In a very logical way, people first in Iping, and then in surrounding towns, become aware of the strange being in their midst. The people are curious, frightened and then determined in their attempts to bring him down and to find out who and what he really is.

This isn't a book about using a superpower to fight evil. But power is definitely a big piece of the puzzle in the Invisible Man. And not just superpower (i.e. invisibility). The Invisible Man touches on how knowledge- in this case, science- is power and how this power can corrupt. Science takes on a lot of different roles in The Invisible Man. First,

it's what scientists do to work out problems they have. For instance, we hear from the Invisible Man about how he developed his invisibility formula through trial and error. Second, science means a community of scientists and their particular traditions; like when you discover something awesome (say, an invisibility formula), you're supposed to tell people about it.

Q.2 How did Griffin, the Invisible Man died? Describe the scene after his death.

Ans. Kemp continues running towards Burdock. The road is long and empty, and no one in the nearby houses will help him. Griffin chases Kemp through the town. People begin to join in the chase. When Kemp realizes that people are chasing Griffin, he stops running, which allows the Invisible Man to catch him. Still, when Kemp arrives in Burdock, he finds a couple of workmen (navvies) on the road. When he yells about the Invisible Man, everyone nearby tries to find and hit the Invisible Man. When the Invisible Man able to grab Kemp, the navvies knock the Invisible Man down. There was a big fight between the crowd and the Invisible Man. Even though people cannot see him, they are able to grab hold of the Invisible Man and keep him down. The effort is not needed for long as Griffin has been fatally injured and seems to have lost a lot of blood. As the town people watch, the effect of invisibility is gradually reversed, and soon, Griffin, now dead, is visible. In death, his invisible albino body gradually materialises again. His body is carried into the Jolly Cricketers.

When Griffin dies and becomes visible, his albino condition is also revealed. It is interesting that the people are not horrified or even surprised. Nor is there any speculation about how this bizarre incident could have happened. The people watch as his broken, battered body slowly becomes visible from his extremities to the centre of his being. It is only when his white face and hair and staring garnet eyes are revealed that someone calls for them to "cover that face" before the children in the town can see it.

Q.3 Who was Mr. Heelas? Why did he refuse Doctor Kemp to enter into his house? When did he start believing in the existing of the Invisible man?

Ans. Mr. Heelas was a neighbour of Doctor Kemp. He didn't believe in the Invisible man but his wife did believe in the Invisible man. He insisted upon walking about his garden just as if nothing was the matter, and he went to sleep in the afternoon. He slept through the smashing of the windows, and then woke up suddenly with a curious persuasion of something wrong. He looked across at Kemp's house, rubbed his eyes and looked again. he said he was damned, but still the strange thing was visible. The house looked as though it had been deserted for weeks- after a violent riot. Every window was broken, and every window, save those of the belvedere study, was blinded by the

internal shutters. When he saw that the shutters of the Kemp's drawing-room window were flung open violently, and the housemaid in her outdoor hat and garments, appeared struggling in a frantic manner to throw up the sash.

He saw the house maid and Doctor Kemp helping her out of the window Then Mr. Heelas saw Doctor Kemp jump from the window and running along the garden and towards Mr. Heelas house. Then he realised that there is an Invisible Man who is running after Doctor Kemp. He ordered his cook and servants to lock all the doors and shut all the windows as the Invisible Man running after him and might enter his house along with Doctor Kemp.

Q.4 How did Doctor Kemp escape from the terror of the Invisible Man, when Griffin came to his house to kill him?

Ans. After Griffin leaves, the next afternoon, Kemp receives a letter from Griffin, written in apocalyptic language, which announces 'day one of year one of the new epoch'. In the worst letter ever, Griffin tells Kemp that he is taking charge: "Port Burdock is no longer under the Queen, tell your Colonel of Police, and the rest of them; it is under me- the Terror! This is day one of year one of the new epoch- the Epoch of the Invisible Man. I am Invisible Man, the First ". The letter also says that Griffin will kill Kemp that day. What's even better is that Griffin sent that letter without a stamp, so Kemp had to pay for it upon delivery. Kemp has his housekeeper lock up all the windows and gets his revolver ready. He writes a note for Col. Adye, saying that Kemp will act as bait to catch Griffin and that Griffin will be caught because he will have gone to fair. A knock at the door turns out to be Adye with news that Kemp's housekeeper- who was carrying message (notes) for the police- had been attacked and the notes taken from her. Then Griffin does what he does best: he breaks some windows. But there's no way for him to get into Kemp's house because they've anticipated his arrival. This is the siege of Kemp's house. Griffin makes his presence known by smashing windows in Kemp's house. During the battle that follows, Col. Adye is shot. Griffin gets inside the house and tries to tell the police to "stand away" as he is only after Kemp. He swings an axe at them, but one of them manages to strike him with an iron poker. By this time Kemp has followed his housekeeper through a window and is nowhere to be found.

Q.5 The narrator sympathises with Griffin at the beginning of the chapter "The Wicksteed Murder". Do you think this sympathy is totally justified? Give your own opinion.

Ans. The narrator presents evidence to suggest that, after leaving Kemp's house, Griffin proceeded to Hintondean, where he murdered Lord Burdock's steward, Mr Wicksteed. After this he seems to have gone on to the downland where, the campaign to track him down was now in full swing. The Invisible Man lies low. The narrator constructs a tale about Griffin's whereabouts and actions using his imagination and a few available facts.

After Griffin runs out of Kemp's house, the narrator loses track of him for a day: "No one knows where he went nor what he did". But no one else is going to be in nice to Griffin: everyone else seems to be out hunting him with guns and dogs. To make things worse, Kemp spreads the news that people need to keep the Invisible Man from eating or sleeping. The narrator is careful to emphasize that these are his conjectures- no one can exactly know how the events occurred, or how Griffin came to possess a weapon. The narrator further theorizes that Griffin's agitated state of mind and general lack of empathy make him immune to the crime he has committed. The narrator attempts to provoke the reader's sympathy by emphasizing the series of disappointments that Griffin has suffered to harden him, the worst blow being Doctor Kemp's treachery.

Q.6 Write in brief about the murder of Mr. Wicksteed. How was Griffin involved in the murder?

Ans. The entire countryside around the Burdock has been mobilized. By 2:00 in the afternoon, men set out with guns, clubs and dogs, and the police warn the village people to lock their doors and stay inside. Griffin manages to evade his pursuers for a 24-hour period except for one encounter with a middle-aged man (Mr. Wicksteed) who had apparently concerned him. Griffin kills the man by beating him with an iron rod. The narrator constructs a tale about Griffin's whereabouts and actions using his imagination and a few available facts. In his words, the irate Griffin hurts a child on his way out of Kemp's house and hides in the thickets of Hintondean to scheme again. From mid-noon to two-thirty, he possibly stays there, trying to come to terms with Kemp's betrayal and cursing his luck. Then he sets out, armed with an iron rod for some purpose that cannot be guessed. A harmless man by the name of Wicksteed witnesses the rod moving on its own, ignorant of Griffin's reputation. He follows the rod is violently murdered by Griffin in a gravel pit. Since no one was there but Griffin we'll never know what happened, only that Wicksteed was beaten to death with an iron rod. The narrator is careful to emphasize that these are his conjectures - no one can exactly know how the events occurred, or how Griffin came to possess a weapon.

Q.7 To save himself from the cold and the snowstorm of London, where did Griffin go? How did he spend the night there and what happened next morning? Write in detail.

Ans. With a January snowstorm blowing in London, Griffin needed to find a place to stay. He went to a giant department store named Omniums. With the intention of clothing himself so that he might reclaim his notebooks and cheque book. He had gone into the Omniums, a large apartment type store where one could buy everything from groceries to clothing. Griffin waited until the place closed, then he started searching around for things he could use. He stole some food and clothes. Over by toys, he saw some fake noses, wigs and other costume stuff that could help him pretend to be

normal. He made his way to an area of bedsteads and mattresses, hoping that once the store is closed for the night, he would be able to sleep on the mattresses and steal some clothes with which to mask his condition.

In the night he procured a complete set of clothes for himself, helped himself to food in a refreshment department, and then slept in the bedding department. He failed to awaken before the morning crew had entered, however, and was unable to escape as long as they could see him. The workers chased him around the store (they could see him because he has wearing clothes); but once again, Griffin took off his clothes to become invisible. He was only able to escape by discarding his clothing and assuming invisibility once more. Since he couldn't steal clothes, Griffin had to leave the store with nothing on (naked).

Q.8 How did Griffin discover the drawbacks of being invisible? How did he avoid a unit of a marching Salvation Army Band?

Ans. Griffin continues to explain his experiences with invisibility. Griffin recounts his adventures immediately after escaping from his lodgings. These were not the 'wonderful things' he had fantasised about, but a series of calamities and accidents experienced as , naked and invisible, he attempted to negotiate the busy streets of Central London. He soon discovered that being invisible had as many drawbacks as advantages. People ran into him and stepped on him. He had to be continually on guard as to the movements and position of others in order to avoid accidental contact. To make matters worse, although people could not see him, dogs could detect him with their keen sense of smell. As he had to remain naked, he was soon uncomfortable. Also, he could not eat, as food was visible until it was fully assimilated into his system. At one point, he had run up the steps of a house in order to avoid a unit of a marching Salvation Army band. He tried to get out of the way, but he had stepped in some mud and left muddy footprints. While he waited, two youngsters spotted the prints of his bare feet in the mud. Soon a crowd of people had gathered to look at the "ghost prints".

Q.9 Why did Griffin decide to experiment to become Invisible on himself? How did he manage to protect and secure his theory of invisibility? Write in detail.

Ans. Back at the boarding house, Griffin continued his experiments. He made some wool invisible and then he made a neighbourhood cat invisible. Later the next day he had an altercation with the landlord who brought reports of Griffin tormenting a cat in the night. The landlord wanted to know what Griffin was doing in the room and what all the paraphernalia was for. The two argued and Griffin shoved the landlord out of the room.

This event and his near-bankruptcy precipitated Griffin's decision to make himself invisible. Griffin knew he would have to act quickly, so he made arrangements to have his belongings stored. Realizing that this would lead to trouble, Griffin decided to

disappear. He sent his books off by mail to some place where he could pick them up later. Then he started the process of turning himself invisible, which really hurt. He managed to protect and secure his theory of invisibility by sending his books and destroyed his equipment and set his room on fire.

Q.10 Why did Griffin switch from medicine to physics? Why did he not want to publish and disclose his research theory to his professor? Give reason?

Ans. Over breakfast, Griffin begins to tell Kemp at length how he became invisible. He had been a medical student, but had dropped medicine and taken up physics. Griffin was a medical student at the same time as Kemp, but Griffin switched to physics because he was interested in light. We also learn that, after leaving London seven years previously, he earned a living and had access to experimental resources as a demonstrator in a college in Chesilstowe. He came up with a loose theory for how to make objects invisible, but needed to figure out a method to actually do it.

He discovered a formula of pigments that lowers the refractive index of a substance, allowing light to pass through it rather than being reflected or refracted. After experimenting with pigments for three years, he came upon the secret whereby animal tissue could be rendered transparent. He was continuously trying to hide his work from another professor. He thought that his professor Mr. Oliver might take the credit for Griffin's published theory.