

## THE INVISIBLE MAN BY H.G.WELLS

### (CHAPTERWISE CLASS NOTES)

#### Chapter-1

##### The Strange Man's Arrival

The book starts with a stranger arriving in a snowstorm at the Coach and Horses, an inn/bar in Iping.

The stranger is totally covered, with only his shiny nose showing. He's also wearing spectacles with sidelights, which basically look like goggles. The stranger looks, well, strange, but he's got money, so Mrs. Hall, the innkeeper, gives him a room.

Still, Mrs. Hall is surprised by his appearance when she sees him in his room without his hat: Luckily, he's covered the lower part of his face with a serviette (a napkin), so she doesn't have to deal with what's there.

Mrs. Hall assumes that this guy was in an accident. She tries to get him to talk about what happened (nosy much?), but he doesn't want to talk about his "accident" with a gossipy innkeeper. Instead, he asks her about getting his luggage from the railroad station. Not quite as good for gossip.

#### Chapter 2

##### Mr. Teddy Henfrey's First Impression

Now we're introduced to Teddy Henfrey. He's a villager and a clockjobber, which might sound awesome, but it just means that he fixes clocks. Still awesome, we guess. At any rate, Henfrey makes his way to the Coach and Horses that afternoon.

Mrs. Hall wants Henfrey to fix a clock in the stranger's room. They enter his room without knocking, which is a bad idea whether your guest is a mad scientist or not. For a moment, Mrs. Hall thinks the stranger has a giant mouth, but he covers his face again.

The stranger tells Mrs. Hall that he would like to be left alone. See, he's an "experimental investigator" – which means scientist – and he's got some research that could be messed up by people entering whenever they want.

Also, he was in an accident, and his eyes are sensitive, which is why he's always covered and wearing his dark glasses. Wow, sounds like the stranger's got an answer for everything.

Mrs. Hall leaves Henfrey to fix the clock. Henfrey takes a long time with the clock on purpose, so that he can see more of the stranger. Looks like Henfrey could use a hobby. The stranger catches him wasting time, though, and tells him to finish up and get out.

Henfrey wonders what the man's secret is – maybe he's wanted by the police? On his way through the village, Henfrey runs into Mr. Hall and tells him, "You got a rum un up home!" (2.36). Translation: "there's a weird guy staying at your place."

This gets Mr. Hall a little suspicious. But he's also a little drunk (that's his hobby), so his wife tells him to mind his own business. Although, truth be told, Mrs. Hall is a little suspicious of the stranger herself.

### Chapter 3

#### The Thousand and One Bottles

We learn here that the stranger came to Iping on February 29th. (So maybe this is 1896, since that was a leap year. Although, we should note that the first chapter says he arrived early in February [1.1]. So let's all agree that it's hard to keep track of time.)

The next day, the stranger's luggage is brought from the station by a man named Fearenside, who has a dog, which makes Fearenside our favorite character so far.

The stranger has lots of luggage, including boxes of glass bottles cushioned by straw. He would probably love to yell at people to be careful with his boxes, but Fearenside's dog attacks him and rips his glove and pants.

The stranger runs back to his room to change his clothes. Mr. Hall, nice guy that he is, checks on the stranger to make sure he wasn't hurt. But when he enters the room without knocking (will they ever learn?), he sees something strange. Unfortunately for the reader, Hall gets pushed out of the room before he can figure out what he saw.

The villagers are now hanging around the luggage, gossiping and saying what they would do if a dog bit them. These people clearly don't have TVs. When the unhurt stranger gets the boxes, he starts unpacking all of his bottles and gets to work immediately.

Mrs. Hall brings him dinner, but – surprise, surprise! – enters without knocking.

So, of course, two things happen: (1) she catches a glimpse of something strange (he has very hollow eye sockets, but then he puts on his glasses); and

(2) he complains about being interrupted.

Mrs. Hall fusses over the mess that he's making, but the stranger just tells her to bill him. Down at a local bar, Fearenside and Henfrey gossip about the stranger.

Fearenside says the stranger has black legs – he apparently saw the leg when his dog ripped his pants. Since the stranger has a pink nose, says Fearenside, maybe he's colored like a piebald horse.

## Chapter 4

### Mr. Cuss Interviews the Stranger

The narrator tells us that, after the dog incident, not much happens in Iping until the club festival (which is around the Christian holiday of Whit Monday). Instead, the village settles into something of a routine.

This is the routine: when Mrs. Hall complains about his messes, the stranger tells her to bill him extra, which works fine until April, when he starts to run out of money. No one in Iping really likes the stranger and everyone has a theory about why he's so weird. (How strange is he? He doesn't go to church on Sundays and he goes for walks at night.

Clearly there's something wrong with this guy. Where are the police when you need them?) Some people think he's a criminal or an anarchist or a lunatic or simply a freak who could make a fortune charging people at county fairs to check him out.

Whatever his deal is, everyone seems to agree that the stranger is too irritable for a village, "though [his irritability] might have been comprehensible to an urban brain-worker" (4.8).

One villager who does want to talk to him is the town doctor, Cuss. On Whit Sunday, Cuss goes to talk to the stranger – partly because he's curious, partly because he's jealous of all his bottles. After the talk (which we don't see), Cuss runs out to see Bunting, the vicar.

(In case it's an unfamiliar term, a "vicar" is a parish priest in the Anglican Church. So, he's kind of a big deal in the town.) Cuss wanted gossip, but this is apparently what happened instead: while the stranger was telling him a story about why his research was taking so long (a scientific formula got burned in a fireplace), the stranger revealed that his sleeve was empty.

Then he seemed to use an invisible hand to tweak Cuss' nose. To be clear, if you're trying to hide the fact that you're invisible, tweaking people's noses with your invisible hand is not a good strategy.

## Chapter 5

### The Burglary at the Vicarage

That night, the vicar's house is robbed. The vicar and his wife wake up when they hear a sneeze and some fumbling in his office.

Of course, the couple can't see a robber and are they're incredibly confused. That's it for the chapter.

## Chapter 6

### The Furniture That Went Mad

Back at the Coach and Horses inn, the Halls head down to the cellar to water— down their beer. Yum. Mr. Hall has to go back upstairs to get some sarsaparilla to cover the taste of— the watered-down beer (and also because Wells knows that everyone has trouble spelling "sarsaparilla" and he likes to torture us). On his way, he notices some strange things: the front door is unlocked and the stranger isn't in his room.

The lady of the house, Mrs. Hall, comes to check on the situation in the— stranger's room. She peeks in and, after a few sneezes, the blankets and pillows start flying— around the room, and the furniture starts banging around.

Mrs. Hall immediately assumes that the stranger has put ghosts into her— furniture. (There's a joke here about "spirits," which can mean both ghosts and alcohol. Since alcohol goes into bottles, maybe ghosts could also, and maybe that's what the stranger has in all of his bottles. At least, that seems to be what Mrs. Hall thinks.)

Some of the villagers – including Sandy Wadgers, the blacksmith, and Mr.— Huxter, the general shop owner – get involved in the mystery of the stranger's disappearance and the haunted furniture. With so many people, not much gets done: "The Anglo-Saxon genius for parliamentary government asserted itself; there was a great deal of talk and no decisive action".

Take that, parliamentary government. Finally, the stranger comes out of his room and demands to be left alone.— Huh?

## Chapter 7

### The Unveiling of the Stranger

When this chapter opens, the Halls hear rumors about the burglary the night— before. Everyone at the bar is interested in the strange behavior of the stranger, who— strangely stranges the strange. Okay, we get it. He's strange and the villagers don't like him.

Mrs. Hall and the stranger start arguing about money because he hasn't paid— his bill recently. But he says he found some more money recently (hmmm) and would be happy to pay. This, of course, makes everyone think that he was behind the burglary at the— vicar's house.

Finally, the stranger gets so fed up that he reveals himself to the people at— the bar: "You don't understand," he said, "who I am or what I am. I'll show you. By— Heaven! I'll show you." Then he put his open palm over his face and withdrew it. The centre of his face became a black cavity. Gasp!

The village people freak out, naturally. They were prepared for scars and ugliness, but what on earth is this? All the villagers who aren't in the Coach and Horses come running in to see what all the screaming is about. (Good idea, run toward the screaming...) There are a bunch of people out in the town, since this is a festival day (Whit Monday). Eventually, Constable Jaffers comes to arrest the stranger. But when he (and some other brave people) go to the inn, they find a headless figure eating some bread and cheese.

The stranger explains that he's the Invisible Man. This isn't much of an explanation, but it's the first time "Invisible Man" has been used in the text. So from now on, that's what we'll call him. The stranger – ahem, the Invisible Man – fights with the crowd and seems to be losing. Finally, he says he'll surrender, but instead, he just takes off all his clothes.

Of course, this makes him totally invisible and he starts winning the fight like whoa. The Invisible Man starts to beat down on crowd and they all panic. Constable Jaffers falls pretty hard on his head, and it's not clear whether he's dead or just unconscious.

## **Chapter 8**

### **In Transit**

A villager named Gibbins (or Gibbons, depending on your copy) is napping out on a field. He hears a voice and a sneeze, but can't see anyone. This totally ruins his nap.

## **Chapter 9**

### **Mr. Thomas Marvel Now**

we're introduced to the guy whose last name we wish we had: Mr. Marvel. You might think he's a superhero, but really he's just a tramp – a homeless, jobless guy who wanders around. Marvel wears a shabby high hat, and we first meet him considering two pairs of boots, both probably given to him as charity.

As he ponders the boots, Marvel hears a voice, but he can't see who's talking. So, of course, he wonders if he's drunk or crazy. To prove that he's real and just invisible, the voice starts throwing rocks at Marvel. Nice strategy.

When Marvel is finally convinced that there might actually be someone there, he is able to make out some bread and cheese in front of him. Aha! The Invisible Man explains that he needs Marvel's help. He knows Marvel is also an outcast, plus he promises to reward the homeless man for helping him. He explains, "An invisible man is a man of power." Then he sneezes.

## Chapter 10 & 11

### Mr. Marvel's visit to Iping & In the Coach and Horses

At first, the village people of Iping panicked after the Invisible Man showed— himself, or, uh, didn't show himself.

But after a while, people relaxed and went back to the festival. As the narrator notes, "Great and strange ideas transcending experience often have less effect upon men and women than smaller, more tangible considerations" (10.1).

Basically: parties trump all. Soon, though, another stranger comes to Iping. Stranger to the villagers, at— least: we can recognize him as Marvel thanks to his shabby high hat. This new guy acts suspiciously around the Coach and Horses. For instance, Huxter, the shop owner, sees this guy waiting outside a— window of the inn, holding a bag. A bag! Well, hey, this town hasn't had a great track record with strangers recently. So Huxter runs after the guy, yelling "Thief!"

But, before he can catch the— man, something trips Huxter and knocks him out. The doctor Cuss and the vicar Bunting are going through the Invisible Man's— papers, including his diaries. But they can't understand the diaries and, honestly, they're not even sure that they're written in English. Marvel lets the Invisible Man into the room with Cuss and Bunting. They— obviously don't see the IM, but they ask Marvel to leave. Once he does, Cuss and Bunting lock the door so no one will interrupt them.— Unfortunately for them, this also means that no one will interrupt the Invisible Man when he starts to beat the living daylight out of them.

The Invisible Man wants to know where his stuff is, including his clothes.— He threatens to kill the two men. DISHUM.... DISHUM..... DISHUM.....

## CHAPTER 12.

### The Invisible Man Loses His Temper

Talk about a cliffhanger! Instead of telling us what happens inside the— Invisible Man's room, the narrator shifts his focus to the rest of the bar. From the bar, Teddy Henfrey and Mr. Hall hear some weird goings-on in the— room where the Invisible Man was staying.

They start to investigate, but Mrs. Hall interrupts them, thinking that Mr.— Hall and Henfrey are just spying on Cuss and Bunting for fun. And as we know, that's her job At that moment, Huxter yells out about a thief and goes running off after the man in the shabby high hat. (Now we're back to where we were in Chapter 10.)

The people in the inn come out to see what Huxter is yelling about. They see— Marvel running off and (for some reason) think that he's the Invisible Man (except, you know, visible). They all go running after Marvel, but just like Huxter, they all get tripped. Kind of a hilarious image (villager pile-up?) if you ask us. At this point,

Cuss comes out of the stranger's room in the inn, revealing that— the Invisible Man stole his and Bunting's clothes. Bunting is actually trying to cover himself in a newspaper, which a hilarious little detail that we love to picture.

Once again, the Invisible Man starts beating people up and breaking things:— "his temper, at no time very good, seems to have gone completely at some chance blow, and forthwith he set to smiting and overthrowing, for the mere satisfaction of hurting" (12.48).

Everyone else, including Marvel, runs away. Naturally, the Invisible Man breaks every window at the inn, cuts the— telegraph cable, and does some other damage just for fun.

## **Chapter 13**

### **Mr. Marvel Discusses His Resignation**

Next time we see them, the Invisible Man is threatening Marvel. Apparently,— Marvel tried to run away (though he claims he didn't). That would not have been cool, since Marvel is carrying all of the Invisible Man's stuff, including his research notes.

The Invisible Man is also upset that the news of all this hub-bub will be in— the paper. It's too bad he didn't think of that when he was beating the heck out of people. Even though Marvel points out that he's a bad sidekick, the Invisible Man— won't leave.

## **Chapter 14**

### **At Port Stowe**

The next day, in Port Stowe, Marvel nervously waits on a bench, and ends— up chatting with an elderly mariner (that is, a sailor). (This is the 1890s, so we're not sure how old "elderly" is.)

The sailor thinks he hears coins jingling in Marvel's pockets, though Marvel is clearly a moneyless tramp. The old man tells Marvel all about this amazing Invisible Man that he read— about in the newspaper. The sailor thinks the story is believable because it comes equipped with— names and details. (This is a lesson in how to lie to people: make sure you have some details. See our section on ".)

He also thinks that an invisible man would make a great thief since no one— could see or stop him. Marvel takes the opportunity to prove that he's kind of a dud: right before he— tells the sailor that he knows the Invisible Man, he looks around. Does he expect to see the Invisible Man? In any case, the Invisible Man is there and starts hurting Marvel (secretly).

Marvel quickly covers his tracks, saying that the Invisible Man is just a hoax. Then he gets out of there quickly (or maybe he's pulled by the Invisible Man). The sailor is annoyed at Marvel for letting him go on about this Invisible Man. But later, the sailor hears stories about a bunch of robberies and how people saw money just floating away.

After that, he realizes what had gone down on the bench in Port Stowe, and— just how close he had been to the Invisible Man.

## **Chapter 15**

### **The Man Who Was Running**

Next new character on the docket: Dr. Kemp.— Dr. Kemp is in his study overlooking the town of Burdock. Kemp's study is— full of science stuff, which explains why he's looking out the window: who wants to look at all that science stuff? So, looking out his window, Kemp sees a man with a shabby high hat— running down into town.

Kemp thinks this might just be another fool who is afraid of the Invisible Man. Kemp, of course, is too scientific to believe in an Invisible Man. But outside, the running man looks terrified. Everyone around freaks out,— and for good reason: the Invisible Man is chasing after the running man.

## **Chapter 16**

### **The Jolly Cricketers**

In the town of Burdock, at a pub called The Jolly Cricketers, a bunch of— people are chatting. Suddenly, Marvel bursts in to the pub, yelling for people to save him from— the Invisible Man. The Invisible Man is definitely there, because someone is breaking windows. The bartender hides Marvel in a backroom and an American with a gun gets ready to shoot the Invisible Man when he comes in the front door. (Thank you, America.) The Invisible Man, suddenly sneaky, goes in through the back door.

He begins to attack Marvel, but the other men in the pub rescue him in time. The guy with the gun fires it carefully and is sure he hit the Invisible Man. He tells everyone to go feel for his invisible body.

## **Chapter 17**

### **Doctor Kemp's Visitor**

Back at Kemp's house, Kemp is busying himself with some works of— speculative. Kemp gets interrupted by the shots and looks out to see a crowd at the Jolly— Cricketers. Shortly after, he's interrupted again when someone rings his doorbell. But his housemaid tells him that there was no one at the door. You know where this is going, right?

On his way to bed, after a long day of speculative philosophy, Kemp notices— some blood on the floor and on the handle of his bedroom door. When he opens the bedroom door, he sees some floating, bloody bandages, which makes him feel "eerie" (17.14). That's the understatement of the century. The Invisible Man calls Kemp by his name and tells him not to panic.

Of course, when an invisible man tells someone not to panic, that person panics. So the Invisible Man wrestles Kemp down (which, in our experience, usually doesn't help stop people from panicking). The IM tells Kemp that he knows him from school: he's really a guy named Griffin. He then gives us a little more



he's almost an albino, he's a little younger than Kemp, and he won a medal for chemistry at University College. Kemp calms down enough to give Griffin some whiskey, clothes, and a cigar. This is where we'd get a series of really fun special effects if this were a movie.

Griffin takes a glass of whiskey, which looks like it's just suspended in mid-air. Then he puts on clothes, which look like they're floating. And finally, he smokes a cigar, so the smoke outlines his mouth and throat. It was just a coincidence that Griffin broke into Kemp's house to recover, but now he needs Kemp's help. (Luckily, the bullet that got him just scratched his wrist, so he's not going to die.) Griffin needs help because his partner stole his (stolen) money.

He tells Kemp that he's too tired to tell the full story now and he needs to sleep. He also adds that he doesn't want people to capture him, which we'd say is an odd request for a guest. But that's the kind of guy Griffin is: strange.

## **Chapter 18**

### **The Invisible Man Sleeps**

After Griffin makes sure the bedroom is secure and after Kemp promises not to turn him in, Griffin goes to sleep. Kemp can't sleep right now. For one thing, he's worried briefly about his sanity (was that really an invisible Griffin?). For another thing, Griffin took his bedroom. Instead, Kemp spends some time reading the newspapers from that day. The top news story is about a dangerous invisible man. Kemp remembers all the way back to Chapter 16 and he wonders why Griffin was chasing that tramp. That didn't look like innocent fun.

Kemp worries that Griffin may become more unstable and dangerous. He hesitates, but eventually decides to write a note to Colonel Adye. Then he hears Griffin wake up. As usual, Griffin starts his day off by tossing some furniture around.