Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

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Auteur(s) : Robert Louis Stevenson
Sydney Stevens
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DOCTOR JEKYLL
and
Mr. HYDE
by R.L. Stevenson
OMNIVOX
teaches languages to the world
phonographic adaptation
by SYDNEY STEVENS

THE SINISTER MR. HYDE

Mr. Utterson the lawyer was a man of rugged countenance that was never lighted by a smile; cold, backward in sentiment, lean, dusty, dreary and yet somehow loveable. He was undemonstrative at the best. His friends were those of his own blood, or those whom he had known longest. Hence the bond that united him to Mr. Richard Enfield, his distant kinsman, with whom he enjoyed walking in the streets of London.

It chanced that on one of their Sunday rambles their way led them down a by-street in a busy quarter of the city.

Two doors from the corner a sinister looking building stood out from the general cleanliness of the street. As the two men came abreast the entry Mr. Enfield lifted his stick and pointed:

ENFIELD: Did you ever remark that door, Utterson? It is connected in my mind with a very odd story.

UTTERSON: Indeed; and what was that?

ENFIELD: It was this way. I was coming home about three o'clock of a black winter's morning when all at once I saw two figures: one a little man who was stumping along at a good pace, and the other a little girl who was running down a cross street. At the corner the two ran into one another; and then came the horrible part of the thing. For the man calmly trampled over the girl's body and left her screaming on the ground. I took to my heels and collared my gentleman and brought him back to where there was already a group around the screaming child. He made no resistance, but gave me so ugly a look that it brought out the sweat on me like running. Pretty soon a doctor put in his appearance and pronounced that she was more frightened than anything else.

As I have said, I had taken a loathing to my gentleman at first sight, so had the child's family, which was natural, and the doctor was like the rest of us. Every time he looked at my prisoner he turned sick and white with the desire to kill him. Of course, killing was cut of the question, but we did the next best thing. We told the man that we would make his name stink from one end of London to the other.

I never saw such a circle of hateful faces, and there was the man in the middle carrying it off, sir, really like Satan. «No gentleman but wishes to avoid a scene», he said; «name your figure».

We screwed him up to a hundred pounds and he carried us back to that door, shipping out a key, and went in, and presently came back with ten pounds in gold and a cheque for the balance. The cheque was genuine. Yes, it's a bad story. For my man was a really damnable man, and yet that cheque was drawn by a person who is the very pink of the proprieties, celebrated too, and one of your fellows who do what they call good. Blackmail, I suppose.

3

UTTERSON: Does the drawer of the cheque live there?
ENFIELD: No, he lives in some square or other.
UTTERSON: And you never asked about the place with the door?
ENFIELD: No, sir. I make it a rule, the more a tring looks queer, the less I ask.
UTTERSON: A very good rule too.
ENFIELD: But I have studied the house, and nobody goes in or out except the gentleman of my adventure once in a great while.
UTTERSON: I want to ask the name of the man who walked over the child.
ENFIELD: Well, I can't see what harm it could do. It was a man of the name of Hyde.
UTTERSON: What sort of a man is he to see?
ENFIELD: He's a most extraordinary looking man; he must be deformed, and yet I couldn't specify any particular deformity.
UTTERSON: You're sure he used a key?
ENFIELD: My dear Mr. Utterson.
UTTERSON: Yes I know. I know it must seem strange. The fact is, if I do not ask the name of the other party it is because I know it already.

That evening Mr. Utterson opened his safe and took cut a document endorsed on the envelope as Dr. Jekyll's will. The will provided that in case of the decease of Henry Jekyll, all his possessions were to pass into the hands of his friend and benefactor Edward Hyde. It further provided that in the unexplained absence of Dr. Jekyll for any period exceeding three months the said Edward Hyde should step into Henry Jekyll's shoes without further delay.

This document had offended Mr. Utterson both as a lawyer and as a lover of the sane and customary sides of life. It was bad enough when Hyde was but a name of which he could learn no more; it was worse when it was clothed with detestable attributes, and out of the shifting insubstantial mists which had so long baf fled him there leaped up the sudden and definite pre-sentiment of a fiend.

From that time forward Mr. Utterson began to haunt the door in the by-street and at last his patience was rewarded. One day the lawyer looking forth from the entry saw a small, plainly dressed man make straight for the door and draw a key from his pocket.

Mr. Utterson touched him on the shoulder:

UTTERSON: Mr. Hyde, I think? I see you are going in. I am an old friend of Dr. Jekyll. I thought you might admit me.
HYDE: Dr. Jekyll is from home—how did you know me?
UTTERSON: By description.
HYDE: Whose description?
UTTERSON: We have common friends.
HYDE: Common friends? Who are they?