

R. L. Stevenson

DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE

H. P. Lovecraft

IN THE VAULT

THE NAMELESS CITY

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DOCTOR JEKYLL AND MISTER HYDE

Story of the Door

Mr. Utterson the lawyer was a man of a rugged countenance that was never lighted by a smile; cold, scanty and yet somehow lovable. At friendly meetings, something eminently human beamed from his eye; something indeed which never found its way into his talk, but which spoke more often and loudly in the acts of his life. His friends were those of his own blood or those whom he had known the longest; his affections, like ivy, were the growth of time. Hence, no doubt, the bond that united him to Mr. Richard Enfield, his distant kinsman, the well-known man in London. It was a nut to crack for many, what these two could find in common. For all that, the two men put the greatest store on going for walks together. It chanced on one of these rambles that their way led them down a by street in a busy quarter of London. Two doors from one corner, on the left hand going east, a sinister building appeared. Mr. Enfield, when they came abreast of the entry, lifted up his cane and pointed. "Have you notice that door?" he asked; and when his companion had replied in the affirmative, "It is connected in my mind," he added, "with a very odd story." "Indeed?" said Mr. Utterson, "and what was that?"

"Well, I was coming home about three o'clock in the morning, and all at once, I saw two figures: one a little man who was stumping along eastward at a good walk, and the other a girl of maybe eight or ten who was running as hard

as she was able down a cross street. Well, sir, the two ran into one another naturally enough at the corner; and then came the horrible part of the thing; for the man trampled over the child's body and left her screaming on the ground. It sounds nothing to hear, but it was hellish to see. It wasn't like a man. I yelled at him, took to my heels, collared my gentleman, and brought him back to where there was already quite a group about the screaming child. He was perfectly cool and made no resistance, but gave me one look, so ugly that it brought out the sweat on me like running. The people who had turned out were the girl's own family; and pretty soon, the doctor, put in his appearance. Well, the child was not much the worse, more frightened. But there was one curious circumstance. I had taken a loathing to my gentleman at first sight. So had the child's family, which was only natural. But the doctor's case was what struck me. He was the usual cut-and-dry apothecary, of no particular age and color, with a strong Edinburgh accent. We told the man we could and would make such a scandal out of this. 'If you choose to make capital out of this accident,' said he, 'I am naturally helpless. 'How much?' We screwed him up to a hundred pounds for the child's family; he would have clearly liked to stick out; but there was something about the lot of us that meant mischief, and at last he struck. The next thing was to get the money; and where do you think he carried us but to that place with the door? — whipped out a key, went in, and came back with the matter of ten pounds in gold and a check for the balance payable to bearer and signed with a name that I can't mention, though it's one of the points of my story, but it was a name at least very well known. The figure was stiff; but the signature was good for more than that, if it was only genuine. I took the liberty of pointing out to my gentleman that the whole business looked fraudulent, and that is not common to walk into a cellar door at

four in the morning and come out of it with another man's check for close upon a hundred pounds. But he was quite easy and sneering. 'Set your mind at rest,' he says, 'I will stay with you till the banks open and cash the check myself.' The next day went to the bank. The check was genuine."

"Well," said Mr. Utterson.

"It's a bad story. For my man was a fellow that nobody could have to do with, a really damnable man; and the person that drew the cheque is the very pink of the proprieties.

The pair walked on again for a while in silence; and then, Mr. Utterson, said: "But there's one point I want to ask: I want to ask the name of that man who walked over the child."

"His name was Hyde."

"H'm," said Mr. Utterson. "What sort of a man is he to see?"

"He is not easy to describe. There is something wrong with his appearance; something displeasing, something downright detestable. I never saw a man I so disliked, and yet I scarce know why."

Mr. Utterson again walked under a weight of consideration. "You are sure he used a key?" he inquired at last.

"The fellow had a key; and he has it still. I saw him use it, not a week ago."

Mr. Utterson sighed but said never a word; and Mr. Enfield presently resumed. "Let us make a bargain never to refer to this again."

"With all my heart," said the lawyer. "Deal, Richard."

Search for Mr. Hyde

That evening Mr. Utterson opened his safe, took a document endorsed on the envelope as Dr. Jekyll's Will. The will was holograph, for Mr. Utterson, though he took charge of it now that it was made, had refused to lend the least assistance in the making of it; it provided not only 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," but that in case of Dr. Jekyll's "disappearance or unexplained absence for any period exceeding three months," the said Edward Hyde should step into the said Henry Jekyll's shoes without further delay and free from any burthen or obligation. This document had long been the lawyer's eyesore. And if until then it was his ignorance of Mr. Hyde that had swelled his indignation; now, by a sudden turn, it was his knowledge. He felt he had discovered an evil being.

Then, he set forth in the direction of Cavendish Square, where his friend, Dr. Lanyon, had his house. "If any one knows, it will be Lanyon," he had thought. Dr. Lanyon sat alone over his wine. After a little rambling talk, the lawyer led up to the subject that so disagreeably disturbed his mind.

"I suppose, Lanyon," he said "you and I must be the two oldest friends that Henry Jekyll has?"

"I wish the friends were younger," chuckled Dr. Lanyon. "I see little of him now."

"Indeed?" said Utterson. "I thought you had a bond of common interest."

"We had," was the reply. "But it is more than ten years since Henry Jekyll became too fanciful for me. He began to

go wrong, wrong in mind," added the doctor, flushing suddenly purple. Utterson gave his friend a few seconds to recover his composure, and then approached the question he had come to put.

"Did you ever come across a protege of his — one Hyde?" he asked.

"Hyde? No. Never heard of him."

That was the amount of information that the lawyer carried back with him. From that time forward, he began to haunt the door in the street of shops. By all lights and at all hours, the lawyer was to be found on his chosen post. "If he be Mr. Hyde," he had thought, "I shall be Mr. Seek."

And at last his patience was rewarded. It was a fine dry night. Mr. Utterson was aware of an odd, light footstep drawing near.

The steps drew swiftly nearer. The lawyer, looking forth from the entry, could soon see what manner of man he had to deal with. He was small and very plainly dressed, and the look of him, even at that distance, went somehow strongly against the watcher's inclination. But he made straight for the door, crossing the roadway to save time; and as he came, he drew a key from his pocket like one approaching home. Mr. Utterson stepped out and touched him on the shoulder as he passed.

"Mr. Hyde, I think?" Hyde shrank back: "That is my name. What do you want?"

"I see you are going in," returned the lawyer. "I am an old friend of Dr. Jekyll's, Mr. Utterson."

“Dr. Jekyll is not at home,” replied Mr. Hyde, without looking up. “How did you know me?” he asked.

“Will you do me a favor?” said Mr. Utterson.

“With pleasure,” replied the other. “What shall it be?”

“Will you let me see your face?” asked the lawyer.

“Yes,” returned Mr. Hyde, “it is as well we have met; and a propos, you should have my address.” And he gave a number of a street in Soho and got inside the house.

“Good God!” thought Mr. Utterson, “can he, too, have been thinking of the will?”

The lawyer stood awhile. Mr. Hyde was pale and dwarfish, he gave an impression of deformity. All these were points against him, but not all of these together could explain the hitherto unknown disgust, loathing, and fear with which Mr. Utterson regarded him. “There must be something else,” said the perplexed gentleman. “There is something more, if I could find a name for it.”

Dr. Jekyll Was Quite at Ease

Two weeks later, the doctor gave one of his pleasant dinners to some old cronies and Mr. Utterson so contrived that he remained behind after the others had departed.

“I have been wanting to speak to you, Jekyll. You know that will of yours?”

A close observer might have gathered that the topic was distasteful; but the doctor carried it off gaily. “My poor Utterson,” said he, “you are unfortunate in such a client. I never saw a man so distressed as you were by my will; unless it were that hide-bound pedant, Lanyon, at what he called my scientific heresies. I was never more disappointed in any man than Lanyon.”