CONDENSED CLASSICS

THE STRANGE CASE OF DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE

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Condensation by Irving Bacheller

Robert Louis Stevenson called himself an idler. He was a natural vagabond who loved to go in old clothes upon his own way through the strange city haunts of the disinherited or out upon the open road. He despised sunny society, but talked eagerly with all sorts of men and women. Yet even as a boy he always carried a notebook and pencil and constantly put into words what he saw and thought and felt. He wrote until his health gave way again and again, and then he wrote of that.

MR. UTTERSON was a lawyer who believed in letting people go to the devil in their own way. He and Richard Enfield, a man about town, who was at once his distant kinsman and his friend, often walked about the London streets together. One day they came upon a sinister, windowless, two-story building in a byway.

Enfield told of seeing a man in this street run into a little girl, knock her down and walk over her body. "It sounds nothing to hear, but it was hellish to see," he said. "I collared the man and held him, and though he made no resistance he gave me a look so ugly that it set me in a sweat. He offered to pay damages and came to this house to get the money. He gave me 10 pounds in gold and a check signed by a man I knew. A forgery? Not a bit of it—perfectly good!"

Mr. Utterson asked the name of the man. Enfield with some hesitation said: "His name is Hyde."

"You see I don't ask you the name of the man who signed the check, for I know it already," said Utterson.

That night the latter opened his safe and took from it a will which he reexamined with care. It provided that in case of the death of Henry Jekyll all his possessions were to pass to Edward Hyde, and in case of the disappearance, or unexplained absence for three months of said Jekyll, Edward Hyde should step into Jekyll's shoes without delay. As he studied it the lawyer said: "I thought it madness, now I begin to fear it is disgrace."

He decided to talk with Doctor Lanyon, a great physician and an old friend of Jekyll.

"I see very little of Henry now," said Lanyon. "He began to go wrong some ten years ago. He became too fanciful for me."

Lanyon had never heard of Hyde.

From that time forward Utterson began to haunt that sinister doorway into which Hyde had disappeared. He determined to discover its owner. At last one night a small plainly dressed man approached and drew a key from his pocket. His look suggested deformity but did not show it. Utterson accosted him and said: "Now I shall know you again. It may be useful."

Hyde gave his address in Soho, admitted knowing Jekyll, and disappeared within. Utterson turned away convinced that this loathsome little man had some dark hold upon Doctor Jekyll. In sorrow and in pity he went to call upon Jekyll who lived just around the corner. He was away.

To the butler Utterson said: "I saw Mr. Hyde go in by the old dissecting room door, Poole, is that right when Doctor Jekyll is away?"

"Quite right, sir. Mr. Hyde has a key."

Utterson went home with a feeling that some danger menaced his friend Jekyll.

A year later London was startled by a singularly inhuman murder case. A housemaid, looking from a window, saw a man who resembled Mr. Hyde strike down her master, a venerable, white-haired man, and trample his body under foot in a hellish fury. The old man was Sir Danvers Carew.

The case came to Utterson who alone recognized the weapon which the assassin had dropped. It was a cane which he had himself presented to Henry Jekyll. It was another link in the chain. Utterson took an officer to the address which Hyde had given. The latter was not at home.

The house was empty, and nothing suspicious was to be seen except a pile of ashes on the hearth as if many papers had been burned. Among these the detective discovered a partially burned checkbook. Following this clue they located several thousand pounds at a certain bank.

Hyde did not claim the money. He had gone away, swiftly and safely.

The next step was to visit the sinister house, which was in truth a part of Jekyll's property and known as "The Laboratory." Light fell through a foggy cupola. At the farther end a flight of stairs led to a large room lighted by three iron barred windows which looked on the court. A fire burned in the grate, and there, cowering close to it, sat Doctor Jekyll, looking deathly sick. He held out a cold hand.

Utterson asked if he had heard the news. Jekyll replied that he had heard it cried in the street. Utterson said: "Carew is my client, but so are you, and I want to know what I am doing. Are you hiding this murderer?"

Jekyll swore that he was not but added: "He is safe—quite safe. He will never more be heard of."

He showed Utterson a letter from Hyde in a queer, upright handwriting.

As he went out Utterson asked Poole about the man who had brought the letter to his master. Poole was sure no letter had been handed in. The letter must have come in by the way of the laboratory. Utterson's clerk, an expert in handwriting, put the two letters side by side. After careful study he said: "The two hands are in many points identical. They are differently sloped, that is all."

Utterson's blood ran cold in his veins. "Henry Jekyll has forged in defense of a ferocious murderer," he said.

In less than a week Lanyon took to his bed and died. A day or two after the funeral, a letter from the dead man came by messenger to the lawyer, a missive marked "Private. Not to be opened till the death or disappearance of Henry Jekyll."

Utterson did not open the letter but went at once to call upon Jekyll. He saw only Poole who said his master was hardly ever seen outside the room in the laboratory, and that he had grown very silent and morose.

One evening as Utterson and Enfield went across the court in the rear of the Jekyll house they saw the doctor sitting at one of the windows taking the air with an infinite sadness of mien, like some disconsolate prisoner.

Utterson, shocked at his looks, urged him to come down and walk with him. Jekyll refused sadly. Suddenly as they both stood looking at him his smile vanished and an expression of abject terror and despair came upon his face. He turned away. The window was thrust down. Utterson turned and looked at his companion Enfield. Both were pale, there was an answering horror in their eyes.

One night Poole suddenly appeared at Utterson's house. He came to say that for a week his master had been shut up in his cabinet and that he was alarmed. "I can't bear it any longer."

He could not explain his fears but begged the lawyer to go back with him. His face was white and his voice broken.

Utterson found the entire household in Jekyll's house in a state of panic.

"They're all afraid," said Poole. "Follow me," he added: "I want you to hear, and I want you to be heard—but don't go in, sir."

They knocked on Jekyll's door but a voice said: "I cannot see anyone."

When they returned to the kitchen Poole asked: "Was that my master's voice?" Utterson admitted it was changed. Poole then opened his heart "I believe my master has been made away with," he said.

Poole thought it strange that the murderer stayed. He said that the man in the cabinet room had been crying out night and day for help, and had thrown out papers on which were written orders for certain drugs.

Utterson examined some of these papers which were agonized pleas for a special kind of salt which he had used and wanted again. They were all in Jekyll's hand as Poole admitted. He also explained that once he had caught sight of the man inside. "The hair stood up at sight of him. If that was my master why had he a mask on his face?"

Poole said: "That thing was not my master. My master was a tall fine man—this is a kind of dwarf."

They decided to break down the door.

Poole said: "Once I heard it weeping." This added to the terror and mystery.

They stood before the door and Utterson demanded entrance. A voice from within cried: "For God's sake have mercy."

"That is not Jekyll's voice—it is Hyde's," shouted Utterson, and swung his ax against the door.

Shattering the lock they rushed in. On the floor lay the form of a man contorted and twitching. They drew near and turned the body on its back. It was Edward Hyde, and by his side was an empty vial. He was dead.

Jekyll was not to be found, but the dead Hyde was dressed in what seemed to be a suit of Jekyll's clothes much too large for him.

On the table was a confession addressed to Utterson, and a will drawn in his favor. Lanyon's letter explained the mystery. Hyde had come one night to his office very ill and asked for some powders which Jekyll had left with Lanyon to be given to Hyde when he should call for them. Hyde, a small man, with clothes grotesquely large, eagerly seized the powder and mixed a liquid which had quickly turned from purple to green.

The man drank. He reeled. He staggered. He clutched the table. He seemed to swell. His features changed, and there before Lanyon's eyes, pale and fainting, groping before him with his hands, like a man restored to life stood Henry Jekyll.

Hyde and Jekyll were inhabitants of the same body! By the use of a drug he had been able to change from one personality to the other. Hyde was wholly evil. Jekyll, the amiable, respected professor, had but to drink that powerful drug to become the revolting Hyde.

Wise and Otherwise

Use your head in all things—your tongue in a few.

Give the devil his due always. But don't let him grab yours.

The good book admonishes us to tell the truth, but it's a mighty dangerous thing to do at times.

Impulse sometimes leads a person astray, but it is better to act upon it than to hesitate until too late.

The world owes every man a living, but by some it is considereed a bad debt.

Clothes often attract attention to a man, but it's the scantiness of them that puts a women in the spotlight.

We editors just naturally keep on preaching economy, but apparently no one knows what we mean.

If you want to arouse the ire of a gossip, assume an attitude of indifference when she is relating the latest piece of scandal.

An athletic friend wants to know what is the American national sport. We have two of them—politics and profiteering.

Some people indignantly deny that they are influenced by superstition. They only believe in the efficacy of the Ouija board.

It may seem paradoxical, but some men thrive upon vice and are weakened by the vice upon which they thrive.

A Y. M. C. A. director asserts that inability to wiggle one's ears is a sign of weakness. Then, presumably, he is either a jackass or a weakling.

WHEN WISE MEN ARE FOOLISH

We Americans have a peculiar fault.

There are times when we permit our wisdom to degenerate into foolishness.

For five years we have been too busy with prosperity to provide against the adversity the morrow may bring.

Millions of people today are receiving high wages who before the war had difficulty in earning three good meals a day for themselves and their families.

Some were wise and steadfastly refused to be stampeded. They adopted a policy of systematic saving, and today are living comfortably and have bank books laid away.

Others, normally keen of intellect, succumbed to the shock of sudden prosperity and started the pace. They are still hitting the high spots.

When work became plentiful and wages soared into the clouds, the wise course would have been to lay aside the surplus and accumulate a good large bank account! In time they would have been in comfortable circumstances and receiving an income from their investments.

But wisdom did not prevail.

The money came easily and in bunches, and it has been going as it came. It is still going, and probably eight out of every ten of these people are financially about where they were five years ago.

But even now it is not too late to save.

Work is still plentiful and wages are still high, and any one can save if they desire.

But it doubtful if many of them ever will.

Five years as spenders has spoiled them as savers—and saving is the only thing that will drive the wolf from the door when it begins to howl.

They are enjoying life to the full today, but tomorrow may witness the dead leaves of a lost opportunity falling around them.