



Robert Louis  
Stevenson

THE STRANGE CASE  
OF DR JEKYLL  
AND MR HYDE

  
GIUNTI CLASSICS

  
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ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

# The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

Edited with an Introduction by  
Luciana Pirè

 **GIUNTI**

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## Introduction

Robert Louis Stevenson is one of the few writers whose works cannot be dissociated from the romance of his life. The Scottish novelist James Barrie left the following vivid portrayal of his fellow-student: "I saw a velvet coat, a lean figure with long hair (going grey) and stooping shoulders, the face young and rather pinched but extraordinarily mobile, the manner doggedly debonair". His bohemian manner of dressing was due in part to a permanent lack of cash, but certainly also to a deliberate rejection of his bourgeois social class. It was undoubtedly the attractive power of this personal charm, added to the fact that he was an invalid, that R.L.S. exerted so strongly throughout his life.

The only child of Thomas Stevenson and Margaret Isabella Balfour, Louis was born in a Georgian terrace-house in Edinburgh, on 13 November 1850. Because his parents feared for his life when he was two, the ever-present threat of death intensified their indulgence towards the delicate child. It is true that he acquired from his mother a physical delicacy in the form of a lung weakness, but this was counterbalanced by her gift of humour and optimism. As for his father, a lighthouse engineer, Stevenson later portrayed him as a strict Presbyterian, a difficult and contradictory man of "blended sternness and softness, wise and prejudiced". Towards the end of his own life Stevenson was saying something very similar about himself. But the person who most affected his early life was certainly Alison Cunningham (known as Cummy), his devoted nurse, whose gory tales of Scottish religious martyrs nourished Louis's imagination. His fascination with his own family heritage (*Familiar Studies of Men and Books*, 1882, and *Memories and Portraits*, 1887) went hand in hand with his profound involvement with Scotland, past and present. In the projected 'Four Great Scotsmen', Stevenson paid tribute to the greatest Scottish figures: the poet Robert Burns, the philosopher David Hume, and John Knox, the father of the National Reformed Church; he also included his favourite novelist Walter Scott, whose fictional adventures had lent excitement to his long days in bed as a solitary boy.

Because of his chronic coughs and fevers, he continually had to

interrupt his schooling. Thomas Stevenson intended to bring up his son in accordance with the long family tradition of civil and marine engineering; but, in his rebellion against conventions, what mattered most to Louis was finding friends, smoking and drinking, spending long evenings in the disreputable taverns of the Old Town and consorting with prostitutes. Of course, Thomas could not see these entertainments as socially correct and the differences between them came to a head. At the age of twenty-one Louis confided to his father that he did not wish to become an engineer and wanted to become a writer instead. To soften the blow, he took up law studies instead and finished them in 1875. A brass plaque was put outside the front door of his house: "R L Stevenson, Advocate". The next day he was on his way to France to join his cousin Bob, who was a lively member of the famous "Barbizon school", a colony of landscape painters in a village near Paris.

At Grez-sur-Loing the cousins spent the summer of 1875 together and this was the scene of Stevenson's first meeting with Fanny Osbourne in 1876. She appeared to be a fellow-painter, which made her unusual in that all-male company. She was thirty-six, an independent American "new woman", separated from her husband and with two children, Lloyd and Isobel. She usually wore Indian dresses and liked to walk barefoot. He was twenty-five, and fell deeply in love with her. Two years later Louis set out for California to persuade Fanny to divorce her husband and marry him. Knowing that his parents would approve neither of the trip nor the marriage, he left without informing them and cut himself off from his father's financial help. *The Amateur Emigrant* (published posthumously in 1894), and its sequel *Across the Plains* (1879), are both accounts of Stevenson's first journey to America. His extended trip proved disastrous: he lost weight after a long fever, and those who saw him at that time described his gait as unsteady as that of a drunkard, and "his clothes hung about him, as the clothes of a convalescent".

Barely recovered from this near fatal illness, Stevenson moved into cheap lodgings in San Francisco where he and Fanny were married in 1880. His friends secretly raised two dollars a week to enable the *Californian* editor Bronson to hire the impoverished Stevenson as a part-time reporter. He never allowed himself to give in to self-pity and in fact he faced ill health with cheerful courage; but Fanny was worried because for several months they were unable to meet current bills. In the end Stevenson took the decisive step to return home, accept an annual allowance from his father and to agree to live in a house that his parents had bought for him and his extended family at Bournemouth. He and his wife lived in England until 1887 but during this time he achieved neither happiness nor wealth.

By this time he had written most of those works which were earned

him his fame: two travel books, *Inland Voyage* (1878) and *Travels with a Donkey in the Cévennes* (1879); *Virginibus Puerisque* (1881), a collection of essays passing from vivid memories of childhood into the grim reflections of a moralist; some remarkable tales gathered under the title *New Arabian Nights* (1882); and a book of “semi-serious, semi-smiling” rhymes, *A Child’s Garden of Verses* (1885). Sidney Colvin, who was his closest friend and advisor in literary matters, encouraged him to try his talent in the field of the novel.

*Treasure Island*, his first full-length work of fiction, was published in November 1883, in time for the Christmas buying, and its success was immediate. Serious-minded people declared that they could not put the book aside once they had taken it up. As a result of its success Stevenson gained new self-confidence, along with a strong justification for devoting time to the writing of further stories about pirates and brigands, the sort he himself had loved as a child (*Kidnapped*, 1886, and its continuation *Catriona*, 1893; *Prince Otto*, 1885; and *The Black Arrow*, 1888). Although they have been regarded as classics of juvenile literature, they are not exactly nursery tales. Even in *Treasure Island* an air of suspense and treachery is maintained throughout, and the adolescent Jim Hawkins is linked to the equivocal Long John Silver, like Jekyll to Hyde. The moralist in him had been always preoccupied with sin, personal guilt and the composite nature of man, as was immediately evident when a work emerged which was the very antithesis of an innocent adventure: *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886). For the first time Stevenson gained the attention of the man in the street, as well as that of the readers of literary journals and hard-back books. On his second triumphant arrival in New York, the *New York World Magazine* offered the author of *Dr Jekyll* \$10,000 a year for a weekly contribution. Although gratified, Stevenson was nervous about accepting such a vast sum, accustomed by this time to years of poverty.

The death of his father brought about a general change. At last, Louis felt that the ties which had bound him to Britain could now be severed. On 22 August 1887, he left Britain for the last time, sailing for the United States in order to seek a friendlier climate. Fanny, Lloyd and Stevenson’s old mother (who had left the sheltered comfort of a large house to go into voluntary exile with her only son) accompanied him. He soon found himself in a sanatorium near Saranac Lake in the Adirondacks, where the life about him offered only depressing dullness. It was not a place to tarry in for long. A yachting cruise was quickly planned, and for nearly three years he “wandered up and down the face of the Pacific” aboard one ship or another.

He visited the Marquesas, the Hawaiian Islands and the Gilberts. In Papeete, Tahiti, Louis fell seriously ill and, thanks to Fanny’s deter-

mination and insistence, a long stay was decided on. The local aristocracy welcomed them, and Princess Moë insisted on caring for him personally. His health miraculously improved; therefore, he continued his journey finally reaching Samoa. This was a place to remain in and in which to build a proper home. He purchased an estate of 300 acres in the hills and, while the site for his house (which was to be called "Vailima" meaning "the five streams") was being cleared of jungle, he sailed for Sydney. In November 1890, Stevenson made his way back to Samoa. No one who has read *In the South Seas* (1896) will ever forget the emotional enchantment with which the first sight of the island "which touched a virginity of sense", touched him. Later he gratefully remembered the prophetic visit of a certain Mr Seed, a New Zealand governor, who kept young Stevenson up until dawn with wondrous tales of the South Seas, an ideal place for sufferers from respiratory diseases. Europe never saw him again.

This vagabond from birth had at last found a way of life with which he could identify. He wished from the start to make friends among the Samoans and, as he got to know them better, he became interested in their political problems and fascinated by their history and culture, songs and tattoos, legends and traditions. He fought hard with words, sending off letters to *The Times* in London to defend the rights of the native people against Imperial exploitation by Britain and Germany, so that attempts were made by the governments of both countries to have him deported as a political menace. In the middle of nowhere he became a keen reporter; and among primitives he tried to reproduce on his flageolet the scores of Beethoven, Mozart, Bach, and Chopin. Considering the physical disabilities that denied him the normal activities of a healthy man, the extent to which he attempted to lead the life of a fit, sound human being is quite amazing. The vitality which he achieved during this period was like a rebirth for Stevenson.

For the first time the novelist's imagination played upon scenes and characters of a world with which he had direct contact. Before his first year at Vailima was half over, he had written two of his most admirable fables, *The Bottle Imp* and *The Beach of Falesá*, both stories of South Sea natives seen in relation to white men; and two novels written in collaboration with his stepson Lloyd Osbourne, *The Ebb Tide* (1894) and *The Wrecker* (1892), the second of which tells of Loudon Dodd's adventures in Paris art circles, his shady finances in California, and his transformation into a trader among the South Sea Islands.

Stevenson was highly praised by a number of his contemporaries, including Henry James and Arthur Conan Doyle; they thought of him as a writer moving towards the accomplishment of great things; but he was only forty-four when he died, struck down suddenly by a cerebral



haemorrhage on 3 December 1894. At this time he was still dictating to his stepdaughter another novel he was busy writing, *Weir of Hermiston* (1896). Many think that this might have been his masterpiece, if only he had finished it.

“One little army after another marching up with their chiefs” (his stepson Lloyd Osbourne has recorded) came to fulfil Stevenson’s wish to be buried upon the summit of Mount Vaea and to cut a path for the coffin through the dense jungle. The following day his affectionate Samoan friends and servants carried up Stevenson’s body on their shoulders. They had given him the native title of *Tusitala* (narrator of stories) and credited him with supernatural powers, in the knowledge that he who lived through the telling of tales was capable of the greatest magic of all.

### *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*

The genesis of the novel is well known. According to Lloyd Osbourne’s account, Stevenson wrote the first draft of *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* with remarkable speed. The main details of the story were given him in a dream and in three days’ time a draft was completed. But when in his vibrating voice and full Scottish accent he read it to Fanny, she disapproved and said that he should write it not as straight narrative but more as an allegory. With that, she left the room. When she returned a few minutes later she noticed, to her horror, that the author had thrown the whole manuscript into the fire. Then he sat up and in a sort of frenzy spent the next three days writing it again, and then a few more months polishing the work we today know as *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. On its publication in January 1886 it was immediately recognized as a work of “a very original genius”. Within six months 40,000 copies had been sold in England alone. *The Strange Case* became a popular literary sensation. It was quoted in newspapers and public speeches, used in church sermons and satirised in *Punch*. One of the most powerful and enduring myths in British literature had been created, a myth so potent that it has almost swamped its creator. But the theme of dual personality was not at that time generally familiar to the public. No wonder the publication of this “wicked” book caused a furore that would be unjustifiable for our generation.

Indeed Stevenson’s idea of writing about man’s double being had preceded *The Strange Case*. In his early teens, he had written a play about the true story of Deacon William Brodie (1741-1788), an honest businessman and model citizen by day, but by night an unscrupulous

burglar who led a life of dissipation and audacious robbery. Brodie was eventually betrayed to the authorities by one of his own accomplices. A sensational trial ensued. He was found guilty and hanged before 10,000 citizens of Edinburgh. Years later Stevenson turned that early play into a five-act drama, *Deacon Brodie or the Double Life* (1879). Variations of the same theme of alternating personality occurred in several short stories, as *Olalla*, *Markheim*, and especially in *Thrawn Janet*, which deals with the transformation of a clergyman from devout minister into a devotee of Satan. But, on a broader canvas, the most ambitious development of Stevenson's obsession with the double life is *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889), a historical novel in which two hostile brothers fighting over a woman feed themselves with hate. In a consistent return of the persecuting double and the simultaneous death of the two antagonists, they are much like Jekyll and Hyde.

The names of "Jekyll" and "Hyde" have meaning even for those who have never read their "strange" adventure. Only a careful reading of *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, however, reveals its formal complexity and its serious conception. The story comprises ten chapters, the first eight written in the third person (mostly Mr Utterson's point of view) and the last two in the form of letters. "Henry Jekyll's Full Statement of the Case" which constitutes the last chapter, is frequently cited as the moral the author attached to explain the story. The gradual building up of a sense of horror owes much to this structural discontinuity.

One of the most intriguing aspects of *The Strange Case* is that it eludes any simple interpretation. The fragmentary structure adopted by Stevenson enables the reader to see Jekyll through several different perspectives and in this way to form a composite picture of the central character. In fact, the story is ambivalent regarding the Jekyll-Hyde relationship, unquestionably the crucial centre of the plot. It will be remembered that, for a long period before the emergence of Hyde, Jekyll was "committed to a profound duplicity of life". Alongside his "imperious desire" for dignity and reputation, there was that "impatient gaiety of disposition". But as long as he can eliminate Hyde whenever he chooses, gaiety and respectability are easily reconciled, so that despite the agonies of indecision which he experiences he does not hesitate to drink the drug and transform himself into the guise of Edward Hyde in order to experience that exciting feeling of freedom – for Jekyll does indeed enjoy Hyde's demoniac agility of wit and his unrepressed spontaneous existence. Painful as it is, every time he does manage to release the slumbering monster in his nature to replace the predominantly good self habitually in control, even though Jekyll is fully aware of the wickedness of his double in his career of depravity

and crime (which eventually culminates in the murder of an innocent man). The deep source of Jekyll's anguish is not really his sense of guilt but fear. Just when the metamorphosis becomes involuntary the conflict between natural urges and social pressures becomes altogether unbearable. Only the annihilation of one of the two selves can put an end to that hazardous game.

On the other hand, Hyde is not the antithetical evil counterpart to Jekyll's good. We learn that Hyde is dwarfish, ape-like, and possessed of some nameless deformity that upsets all who look upon him. And yet Hyde is the essence of man's natural vitality and, as an essential natural force, he is a necessary component of human psychology which most would prefer to leave unrealised. He represents that dark side of man which civilization has striven to submerge. Without Hyde, we can never fully know Jekyll. He and Jekyll are inextricably joined. In his moral role, Hyde exemplifies the impossibility of any successful separation of man's natural psychological being. But, although his physiognomy would certainly inspire fear or loathing, the extreme reaction of all whom he encounters condemns him to an increase of egotistic impulses. It is Hyde's forced alienation that turns him against Jekyll, the divine creator whose studies, like those of Faust and Frankenstein before him, tend toward "the mystic and the transcendental". However, in the previous treatment of the theme of the moral duality, the struggle is between the scientist and his creation instead of between two sides of the same personality. The difference is essential, but the results are equally disastrous. At the end of the story the doctor suppresses Hyde, thereby, of course, becoming a "self-destroyer", a suicide.

Of relevant importance to a consideration of *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* is the male-centred perspective of the story, singularly devoid of women. There is no romantic interest and masculine friendship is the tie that binds the main characters together. Jekyll, Mr Utterson, a highly respected lawyer, and Dr Hastie Lanyon, a scientist of "practical usefulness", had created a close society of professional and trustworthy gentlemen, all unmarried, who have known each other well for a very long time. As such, they are representative Victorian types.

Lanyon, in particular, is a kind of mirror-figure for Jekyll. Both eminent medical men with an initial "bond of common interest", they have severed this bond because of what seems to be a professional quarrel. Jekyll's metaphysical speculations about human nature are "too fanciful" for Lanyon. The two scientists thus come to be engaged in widely divergent studies, until curiosity causes them once again to come to share the same forbidden knowledge. In this respect Jekyll's failure is a scientific one: Hyde's identity does not continue to be contained within the formula of the magic drug Jekyll has invented. His

experiment fails because his separation of personality is incomplete, leaving the two personas – who alternately claim ownership of Jekyll’s soul – to fight to the death for domination.

Although the author did not personally intervene with moral comments, but merely described the case from several viewpoints, he nevertheless cherished the value of individual human integrity and saw the development of each individual’s potential as the greatest good. In Stevenson’s view, impediments to human development were the various laws created by man that dictated systems of behaviour: the conventions of civilized society, the rituals of institutionalized religion, and the regulations of ethical codes. On the contrary, ‘original’ evil has its right to freedom; the good man must learn to recognize evil inside and outside himself, and confront and overcome it by seeing the worst that it can naturally do.

Moreover, as in several of his novels, here we find evidence of Stevenson’s special responsiveness to what he called “the genius of place”, which is so powerful a feature of his fiction. He had a striking ability to draw out of real places the possibilities of romance: “certain dark gardens cry aloud for a murder; certain old houses demand to be haunted; certain coasts are set apart for a shipwreck”. Even in the tense horror of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* Stevenson slackens the pace over a long paragraph to describe in detail the labyrinths of London suburbia. G.K. Chesterton, himself a remarkable detective writer, argued that Edinburgh, not London, is the true scene of the story with its dark alleys and criminal underworld, closely resembling the city of Stevenson’s unconventional adolescence.

All things considered, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* has something more than the entertainment qualities of a gothic novel. We can read it as an extremely interesting case-study of certain aspects of the Victorian society that was its milieu; as an allegory of the opposition of good and evil that lurks in all men; as a moral fable about the dangers of scientific curiosity; and finally, from a psychological point of view, as a modern exploration into unconscious, repressed drives.

For many years Stevenson’s own statements about story-telling as a sheer pleasure of blending character and incident have tempted many critics to assume that his attitude toward his craft was not entirely serious. The opposite is the case. *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* is the product of a meticulous craftsman, who cared profoundly about his work. Yet Stevenson felt himself especially qualified to perform a noble service, which he regarded as the most valuable among the writer’s tasks: to entertain his readers, old or young as they may be, “for to miss the joy is to miss all.” That’s what makes him so enjoyable to read more than a century later.

## 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 embarrassed in discourse; backward in sentiment; lean, long, dusty, dreary and yet somehow lovable. At friendly meetings, and when the wine was to his taste, something eminently human beaconed from his eye; something indeed which never found its way into his talk, but which spoke not only in these silent symbols of the after-dinner face, but more often and loudly in the acts of his life. He was austere with himself; drank gin when he was alone, to mortify a taste for vintages; and though he enjoyed the theatre, had not crossed the doors of one for twenty years. But he had an approved tolerance for others; sometimes wondering, almost with envy, at the high pressure of spirits involved in their misdeeds; and in any extremity inclined to help rather than to reprove. "I incline to Cain's heresy," he used to say quaintly: "I let my brother go to the devil in his own way." In this character, it was frequently his fortune to be the last reputable acquaintance and the last good influence in the lives of downgoing men. And to such as these, so long as they came about his chambers, he never marked a shade of change in his demeanour.

No doubt the feat was easy to Mr Utterson; for he was undemonstrative at the best, and even his friendships seemed to be founded in a similar catholicity of good-nature. It is the mark of a modest man to accept

his friendly circle ready-made from the hands of opportunity; and that was the lawyer's way. 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, they implied no aptness in the object. Hence, no doubt, the bond that united him to Mr Richard Enfield, his distant kinsman, the well-known man about town. It was a nut to crack for many, what these two could see in each other, or what subject they could find in common. It was reported by those who encountered them in their Sunday walks, that they said nothing, looked singularly dull, and would hail with obvious relief the appearance of a friend. For all that, the two men put the greatest store by these excursions, counted them the chief jewel of each week, and not only set aside occasions of pleasure, but even resisted the calls of business, that they might enjoy them uninterrupted.

It chanced on one of these rambles that their way led them down a by-street in a busy quarter of London. The street was small and what is called quiet, but it drove a thriving trade on the week-days. The inhabitants were all doing well, it seemed, and all emulously hoping to do better still, and laying out the surplus of their gains in coquetry; so that the shop fronts stood along that thoroughfare with an air of invitation, like rows of smiling saleswomen. Even on Sunday, when it veiled its more florid charms and lay comparatively empty of passage, the street shone out in contrast to its dingy neighbourhood, like a fire in a forest; and with its freshly painted shutters, well-polished brasses, and general cleanliness and gaiety of note, instantly caught and pleased the eye of the passenger.

Two doors from one corner, on the left hand going east, the line was broken by the entry of a court; and just at that point, a certain sinister block of building

thrust forward its gable on the street. It was two storeys high; showed no window, nothing but a door on the lower storey and a blind forehead of discoloured wall on the upper; and bore in every feature, the marks of prolonged and sordid negligence. The door, which was equipped with neither bell nor knocker, was blistered and distained. Tramps slouched into the recess and struck matches on the panels; children kept shop upon the steps; the schoolboy had tried his knife on the mouldings; and for close on a generation, no one had appeared to drive away these random visitors or to repair their ravages.

Mr Enfield and the lawyer were on the other side of the by-street; but when they came abreast of the entry, the former lifted up his cane and pointed.

“Did you ever remark that door?” he asked; and when his companion had replied in the affirmative, “It is connected in my mind,” added he, “with a very odd story.”

“Indeed?” said Mr Utterson, with a slight change of voice, “and what was that?”

“Well, it was this way,” returned Mr Enfield: “I was coming home from some place at the end of the world, about three o’clock of a black winter morning, and my way lay through a part of town where there was literally nothing to be seen but lamps. Street after street, and all the folks asleep – street after street, all lighted up as if for a procession and all as empty as a church – till at last I got into that state of mind when a man listens and listens and begins to long for the sight of a policeman. 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 calmly 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; it was like some damned Juggernaut. I gave a view halloa, 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, for whom she had been sent, put in his appearance. Well, the child was not much the worse, more frightened, according to the Sawbones; and there you might have supposed would be an end to it. 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 colour, with a strong Edinburgh accent, and about as emotional as a bagpipe. Well, sir, he was like the rest of us; every time he looked at my prisoner, I saw that Sawbones turn sick and white with the desire to kill him. I knew what was in his mind, just as he knew what was in mine; and killing being out of the question, we did the next best. We told the man we could and would make such a scandal out of this, as should make his name stink from one end of London to the other. If he had any friends or any credit, we undertook that he should lose them. And all the time, as we were pitching it in red hot, we were keeping the women off him as best we could, for they were as wild as harpies. I never saw a circle of such hateful faces; and there was the man in the middle, with a kind of black, sneering coolness – frightened too, I could see that – but carrying it off, sir, really like Satan. 'If you choose to make capital out of



this accident,' said he, 'I am naturally helpless. No gentleman but wishes to avoid a scene,' says he. 'Name your figure.' Well, 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 presently came back with the matter of ten pounds in gold and a cheque for the balance on Coutts's, drawn 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 and often printed. 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 apocryphal, and that a man does not, in real life, walk into a cellar door at four in the morning and come out with another man's cheque for close upon a hundred pounds. But he was quite easy and sneering. 'Set your mind at rest,' says he, 'I will stay with you till the banks open and cash the cheque myself.' So we all set off, the doctor, and the child's father, and our friend and myself, and passed the rest of the night in my chambers; and next day, when we had breakfasted, went in a body to the bank. I gave in the cheque myself, and said I had every reason to believe it was a forgery. Not a bit of it. The cheque was genuine."

"Tut-tut," said Mr Utterson.

"I see you feel as I do," said Mr Enfield. "Yes, 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, celebrated too, and (what makes it worse) one of your fellows who do what they call good. Blackmail, I suppose;

an honest man paying through the nose for some of the capers of his youth. Blackmail House is what I call the place with the door, in consequence. Though even that, you know, is far from explaining all," he added, and with the words fell into a vein of musing.

From this he was recalled by Mr Utterson asking rather suddenly: "And you don't know if the drawer of the cheque lives there?"

"A likely place, isn't it?" returned Mr Enfield. "But I happen to have noticed his address; he lives in some square or other."

"And you never asked about – the place with the door?" said Mr Utterson.

"No, sir: I had a delicacy," was the reply. "I feel very strongly about putting questions; it partakes too much of the style of the day of judgment. You start a question, and it's like starting a stone. You sit quietly on the top of a hill; and away the stone goes, starting others; and presently some bland old bird (the last you would have thought of) is knocked on the head in his own back garden and the family have to change their name. No, sir, I make it a rule of mine: the more it looks like Queer Street, the less I ask."

"A very good rule, too," said the lawyer.

"But I have studied the place for myself," continued Mr Enfield. "It seems scarcely a house. There is no other door, and nobody goes in or out of that one but, once in a great while, the gentleman of my adventure. There are three windows looking on the court on the first floor; none below; the windows are always shut but they're clean. And then there is a chimney which is generally smoking; so somebody must live there. And yet it's not so sure; for the buildings are so packed together about that court, that it's hard to say where one ends and another begins."

The pair walked on again for a while in silence; and then "Enfield," said Mr Utterson, "that's a good rule of yours."

"Yes, I think it is," returned Enfield.

"But for all that," continued the lawyer, "there's one point I want to ask: I want to ask the name of that man who walked over the child."

"Well," said Mr Enfield, "I can't see what harm it would do. It was a man of the name of Hyde."

"Hm," 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. He must be deformed somewhere; he gives a strong feeling of deformity, although I couldn't specify the point. He's an extraordinary looking man, and yet I really can name nothing out of the way. No, sir; I can make no hand of it; I can't describe him. And it's not want of memory; for I declare I can see him this moment."

Mr Utterson again walked some way in silence and obviously under a weight of consideration. "You are sure he used a key?" he inquired at last.

"My dear sir..." began Enfield, surprised out of himself.

"Yes, I know," said Utterson; "I know it must seem strange. The fact is, if I do not ask you the name of the other party, it is because I know it already. You see, Richard, your tale has gone home. If you have been inexact in any point, you had better correct it."

"I think you might have warned me," returned the other with a touch of sullenness. "But I have been pedantically exact, as you call it. The fellow had a key; and what's more, he has it still. I saw him use it, not a week ago."

Mr Utterson sighed deeply but said never a word; and the young man presently resumed. "Here is another lesson to say nothing," said he. "I am ashamed of my long tongue. Let us make a bargain never to refer to this again."

"With all my heart," said the lawyer. I shake hands on that, Richard."