

DR JEKYLL & MR HYDE

SYNOPSIS

ACT ONE

Scene one.

The streets of London. A young girl is kipping and playing. Hyde appears and savagely knocks her down, almost killing her. The girl's father is near and rushes to the scene, a group of angry neighbours appear. Hyde is in danger of being beaten perhaps to death. Miss Utterson appears, she mediates. As a lawyer's clerk she knows the rules: she despises the brutal Hyde but he should not be lynched (hung) by the mob. He must pay the girl's father. She is accepted by all involved and proposes a payment that the other accepts. But as its late Hyde must go to a friend to collect a cheque for the large sum of 100 pounds. He returns with the cheque. It is signed by Dr Jekyll, a terrible shock for Miss Utterson who is recovering from a romantic affair with the same Doctor that has ended in her rejection and broken heart. Hyde races off leaving Utterson shocked and confused.

Scene 2.

Hyde now relishes his escape and laughs. He talks to the audience as the embodiment of evil, asking them to think of their own secrets and how their moral world may just be a lie.

Scene three

Sir Danvers Office. Abigail Utterson is singing to herself. She is proud of what she has achieved as an independent woman who ignored her family advice and came to London to find her independence rather than staying the countryside and get married.

He boss, Sir Danvers, calls her into his office. She teases him, as he is old fashioned in his views about women working. He gives her a task: to type out a handwritten will. She takes the will. On reading it she realises with horror this is the Will of Dr Jekyll, giving everything to Mr Hyde, all his money and property, in the event of his death or disappearance.

She has promised never to speak to Dr Jekyll again after he broke her heart but now, she must break her promise and try to save him, warn him against the horrible My Hyde.

Scene 4

A wet London night, Miss Utterson takes her bright red umbrella and walk towards Jekyll's house. She sees Hyde slip into a side door, knocks and then suddenly a large red eyed dog appears in the darkness, snarling and barking. It attacks and pursues her; she runs back to her house.

She decides to go again to Jekyll's house tomorrow despite the fierce hound. She sends a letter to Sir Danvers, lying that she has been bitten and cannot type. This allows her to keep the Will without it going into effect.

Scene 5

Hyde appears laughing and talks to the audience accusing Abigail of lying to herself, that she is really in love with Dr Jekyll and a liar.

A song: Secrets.

Scene 6

Abigail goes to Jekyll's house the next day. Poole the Butler welcomes her. He is troubled by Hyde's use of the house, he comes as he pleases (it seems). Meanwhile Jekyll is locked for days in his laboratory. He takes Utterson's red umbrella, a gift from Jekyll, and she goes into the house expecting to meet the doctor and warn him about Hyde, who would have every motive to kill him if the Will is signed (and typed). But Jekyll is not there, it is Hyde who "welcomes" her, relaxed in the Doctor's sitting room.

It seems Hyde wishes Utterson to leave him alone at first, it all seems he knows a great deal about her past secret affair with Jekyll. But then it is clear he is manipulating Utterson, that he will require her and her legal office to assist him to benefit from the Will if Jekyll vanishes forever. He laughs and races into the laboratory where no one may enter. Abigail is speechless with worry. She goes to leave. Asking Poole about the giant hound who chased her way from the house last night. But Poole says there is no dog. Is it her imagination or was it Hyde? In her rush to leave she forgets her umbrella.

Scene 7

Poole delivers a letter to Abigail from Dr Jekyll that he has hidden from Hyde. It begs her to visit him in his house and that all will become clear. It is full of apologies. Abbigail's delighted. She sets out for the house once more.

Jekyll in his laboratory sings as he combines chemicals. He seems happy in his work. Abigail arrives and they share a drink and talk. Jekyll tries to reassure her that Hyde is not so evil and a friend that he is trying to protect or even save and that he has the whole situation under control. He does ask her to honour the Will. Abigail tries to object but she wants to believe Jekyll. She realises as he says that her feelings for him have not vanished and just as she goes, she kisses him on the lips then runs away in embarrassment at her own forwardness. Jekyll is stunned. What can he do for her own safety she should not be involved in his life, but he too has strong feelings for this remarkable woman.

Act two

Scene 1

Sir Danvers sings of his hope that Miss Utterson might be his new wife, even though he is old. He knows he is foolish, but he is allowed to dream. He sees Miss Utterson obscured by her red umbrella and goes to give her roses. But it is Hyde behind the umbrella, and he kills Danvers by repeated stabbing with the red umbrella then flees.

The police arrive. But Hyde has escaped. Newsboys cry murder! And Hyde mocks the audience for enjoying murder thrillers, good is boring evil exciting?

Scene 2

The police arrive at Miss Utterson's lodgings. They inform her of the murder and ask her if she knows who owns the red umbrella. She says she does not know the umbrella. She lies to protect Jekyll - or is she protecting Hyde?

Scene 3

Abigail Utterson goes back to see Jekyll, despite promising never to see him again. She must confront him about Danvers murder, in which Hyde must be involved. Jekyll is in shock, He promises Abigail he has got rid of Hyde. He shows her a letter that Hyde sent him swearing to vanish from his life.

He hands this as proof to her and asks her to look over it at her home. She believes him and takes the letter but as she leaves, she asks Poole who delivered the letter and why the letter has no postmark. Poole says that no letter was delivered. Suspecting the worst Abigail returns to her house and compares the letter to the Will, realising it is written by the same person: Dr Jekyll and that this is not from Hyde but a lie, to trick her. Why is Jekyll protecting a murderer?

Scene 4

Hyde approaches Miss Utterson's house at night. He sings to himself teasing the audience with their pleasure in violent fiction.

He breaks into the house. Abigail confronts him, he tells her that she was protecting Hyde not Jekyll with the police. He tells her that her secret is that she feels more for Hyde than Jekyll. He threatens to kill her then laughs and offers her the knife which she cannot use. The police arrive, he escapes, taunting her that he has stolen her heart that his wild energy and fascinating strength has bewitched her. Abigail shouts "no", but something Hyde says is true, perhaps it is just that she senses this is Jekyll. In her confusion she once again protects Jekyll from the Police. Jekyll in fact arrives just as she was about to voice her suspicions, she cannot

betray Jekyll so once again she lies to the police, who leave.

Scene 5.

Jekyll seems reformed. He takes Abigail by the arm and asks her to accompany him to his medical practice in the poor East End of London where he is giving free treatment/ The sun rises and it seems that Hyde has gone forever. Jekyll is his old self, charming and charitable.

Alone in her room, Abigail decides that the future is to marry Dr Jekyll now he is reformed. She sings of the difficulty in a woman asking a man to marry, but she will do so. She has a ring and sets off to Dr Jekyll's house. She pushes aside her conflicting feelings for Hyde. She will marry a good man.

Scene 6. The finale.

Utterson goes to Jekyll's house in the best of moods confident she can offer wedding ring to Henry Jekyll. But as she arrives Poole is worried; he has been sent to find chemical, but nothing satisfies the doctor who seems to have given up on his medical practice and now locked in the laboratory. Abigail insists on unlocking the door. There she finds Hyde, but a strange Hyde with elements of Jekyll, trying to mix potions, speaking as if he is two people, using "we" where he should use "I". She confronts him, accusing him of murdering her beloved doctor. But it is clear there is something else, the weird attraction of Abigail to Hyde, which he manipulates as she gradually realises the horror that Hyde and Jekyll might be the same. Hyde now struggles with his two beings. Just as Abigail mixes horror and love. Finally, Hyde declares he is Henry Jekyll and that

his love for her is such he must destroy Hyde even if he kills himself to save his one love: Abigail. He swallows the poisonous chemicals and dies in her arms. But is he Hyde who has redeemed himself or Jekyll who has created pure veil She sings her sadness for her lost love and places the ring on Hyde's finger even as she declares himself to be Dr Jekyll as he dies.

The end

