

CHARACTERS

EUPHRONIA JEKYL, society matron
AMBROSIA JEKYL, her daughter
HENRY JEKYL, her son
LADY THROCKMORTONSHIRE, a grande dame
CALLIOPE and PENELOPE THROCKMORTONSHIRE, her
twin daughters, aged 9
ROSAMUNDA DEWTHISTLE, eligible young lady
XAVIER UTTERSON, cousin to Jekyl
IVY, maid
PLODGETT, cook
CONSTABLE
POLICE LIEUTENANT

The twins are played by one actor. The older women (Mrs. Jekyl and Lady Throckmortonshire) may be played by men. If doubling is desired, one actor may play Xavier/Police Lieutenant, and Ambrosia may double as the Constable.

SETTING

The play is set in a Victorian England of the imagination.

CHEMICAL IMBALANCE: A JEKYL AND HYDE PLAY

ACT ONE

Scene 1

A dark and suspenseful music. Enter Ivy, with feather duster. She crosses downstage, gathers her courage and addresses the audience. When she says his name, Henry appears, mixing a potion.

IVY. There was once a young man named Henry Jekyl, in whom fine upbringing and an excellent education were combined, with disastrous results. Though he seemed at the outset to be destined for happiness, to travel through life in the cushioned compartments of wealth and privilege, to enjoy the esteem of his fellow men and the fond admiration of women, sadly, this was not the fate allotted to him. Instead, he was to be doomed and miserable, and hated by all of humankind. *(Henry recedes.)* How this came to pass and whose fault it was, it is now our pleasure to relay. *(Christmas caroling off. Renewal of Euphronia and Ambrosia, in drawing room. Euphronia lies recumbent. Ambrosia sits, eating chocolates. Ivy dusts.)*
AMBROSIA. Oh, listen, Mother — the carolers!
EUPHRONIA. The what? Oh, yes. How perfectly delightful.
AMBROSIA. Ivy, go and open the window a crack so we can hear them better.
IVY. Yes, Miss Jekyl.
EUPHRONIA. Ambrosia, really. The draft.
AMBROSIA. I'm sorry, Mother. I forgot you were languishing.

EUPHRONIA. Imagine Plodgett serving that vile white paste and calling it icing. My stomach may never recover.

IVY. Would you like another bicarbonate of soda, Madam?

EUPHRONIA. No. But see about getting the carolers some table scraps from the kitchen. I do so like to support the arts.

IVY. Yes, Madam. *(A scream, off, then shouting.)*

EUPHRONIA. Good heavens, this must be some sort of experimental carol.

AMBROSIA. *(At window.)* Something's happening outside! It looks like a fight!

EUPHRONIA. Well, you know these artistic types. Always at each other's throats. Probably some dispute over a love affair.

AMBROSIA. Mother, please! This is serious!

IVY. I see blood! On the steps! *(Enter Plodgett, distressed.)*

PLODGETT. Oh, Madam, oh, Miss — it was something awful!

AMBROSIA. Stop shrieking. Plodgett. Just calm down and tell us what happened.

PLODGETT. Yes, Miss. Oh, but I can't come into the drawing room. I've got my snow galoshes on.

EUPHRONIA. Never mind that. Ivy will swab it up. Now, what on earth is happening on the door-stoop?

PLODGETT. Well, Madam, it was like this. There was the carolers singin' pretty as a bunch of larks on the front steps, singin' "Deck the Halls" I believe it was, and they had a wee dog, Miss, dressed up in a Christmas hat with wee holes for its ears. Oh, it was the sweetest thing you ever saw, that dog, with its wee paws hangin' from the sled, and the wee bucket of pennies hangin' from its wee mouth, and its wee brown eyes starin' up from its wee —

AMBROSIA. That's enough about the dog. What happened to the carolers?

PLODGETT. Well, that's just it, Miss! It was all because of the dog! He was sittin' in his wee sled on the sidewalk when along came a man, a passer-by, with a face as ugly as a rotten apple. Oh, he had a mean look in his eye, that one, and before you knew what was comin' he picked up the dog and threw it!

AMBROSIA. He threw the dog?

PLODGETT. Right at the front steps! The poor thing died in an instant, with only a whimper to mark its passin', and a pool o' blood the size of a tablecloth. You know, I see quite a bit of dead animal in my line of work, but I can't remember when I saw so

much blood come from such a wee —

AMBROSIA. Plodgett, please. Mother is dyspeptic.

PLODGETT. Sorry, Madam. I'll just move on to the ending then. The carolers tried to catch the scoundrel but he shoved 'em down one after the other, and gambled up over the garden wall quick as a monkey!

EUPHRONIA. You don't mean to say he's in our garden now?

PLODGETT. Well, I don't know, Madam, but that's where he went last I saw him!

EUPHRONIA. Ivy, I want you to concentrate. Try to remember — is the garden door locked?

IVY. I think so, Madam.

EUPHRONIA. Thank heavens!

IVY. But I did leave the window open when I let the cat out. *(A clatter, off.)*

AMBROSIA. What was that? A curtain rustling?

PLODGETT. You don't suppose he's in the kitchen, with the knives and harchers?

IVY. No, it sounds like he's in the pantry with the garden implements.

EUPHRONIA. Good heavens, what on earth will become of us?

AMBROSIA. Oh, Mother! If only Father were here! *(All eyes look heavenward. Enter Henry.)*

HENRY. Hello, all! *(All scream. Plodgett hides behind sofa.)*

EUPHRONIA. Henry!

HENRY. Good evening, Mother. What's our Miss Plodgett doing behind the sofa? Playing hide and seek? I see you, Plodgett! The jig is up!

AMBROSIA. Henry, there's been an atrocity on our front steps!

HENRY. Atrocity? What's happened? Newspaper tossed in a puddle?

EUPHRONIA. There's a maniac. A ruffian loose in the streets. He throttled a little lapdog under our lintel.

HENRY. No. How perfectly awful. It's downright devastating is what it is. *(All agree.)* Well, no use spoiling the whole evening over it. What's for dinner?

AMBROSIA. How can you be so callous!

HENRY. Oh, dear, dear Ambrosia. I'm not being callous. In the medical profession we learn to grow a thick skin, that's all. Day after day we see twisted, contorted bodies clamber up to our offices, racked in pain, coughing up organs, bleeding geyzers of

blood. We can't let every bit of suffering affect us, or we'd be too miserable to help anyone at all.

EUPHRONIA. You're perfectly right, my dear. Thank heaven for your medical dispassion. We ladies so often require a doctor's hand to pull us from these horrid torrents of feeling.

HENRY. Now then, let's all put this dreadful dog incident behind us and try to salvage the evening.

PLODGETT. We're having a nice ham, Dr. Jekyll. And creamed cabbage.

HENRY. Wonderful, I'm famished. And set another chair at the table. Ivy. Cousin Xavier's joining us.

IVY. Yes, sir. *(Exit Ivy, Plodgett.)*

EUPHRONIA. Henry, have you forgotten Miss Dewthistle is coming? I arranged it especially with her mother at the Hollings-Bufordsmith charity luncheon.

HENRY. Ah, yes, Miss Dewthistle. I suppose I had forgotten. Well, the more the merrier!

AMBROSIA. And Lady Throckmortonshire with those horrid daughters of hers.

HENRY. Oh no, they aren't coming tonight?

EUPHRONIA. Lady Throckmortonshire is my dearest friend and I refuse to hear any slanders against her or her family.

AMBROSIA. But she's insufferable.

HENRY. Those hars of hers! Like something crawled out of a sewer and gave birth on her head.

AMBROSIA. And those pug-nosed little twins one can never tell apart.

HENRY. *(Lisps.)* Except for the lisp, of course. Penelope was born with a lisp. *(They laugh.)*

EUPHRONIA. I'm ashamed of you two. Snickering behind their backs like schoolchildren! The poor girl can't help it if her tongue won't work properly. And though Lady Throckmortonshire may have lamentable taste in hats, she is nonetheless the richest woman in the nation, and therefore worthy of respect.

HENRY. You're right of course. We promise to behave.

EUPHRONIA. See to it you do. Ambrosia, come along and help me with my hair. The strain of the afternoon has caused it to list inelegantly downward. *(Exit Euphronia.)*

AMBROSIA. Yes, Mother. Now Henry, you have to pay attention to Miss Dewthistle tonight. You mustn't spend the whole evening

talking medicine with cousin Xavier.

HENRY. But I don't know what to say to Miss Dewthistle. She unnerves me.

AMBROSIA. You like her, don't you?

HENRY. Well, of course I like her.

AMBROSIA. And you want to marry her?

HENRY. I don't know about that. Perhaps someday, but for now I'd rather be wed to science.

AMBROSIA. Henry, listen to me. It's not good for you to spend so much time in the laboratory. You have to marry and have children before your hair drops out. And Miss Dewthistle's family has a great deal of money and you know how strapped we are now that Father's ... *(Both gaze heavenward. Enter Ivy.)*

IVY. Mr. Utterson's here, Miss.

AMBROSIA. Well, show him in, you fat-headed twit! *(Exit Ivy.)* I hope he isn't wearing those ridiculous spats. They make him look such a lame little wood-duck. *(Enter Xavier, in spats, shaking off snow.)*

XAVIER. Evening, all! Sorry I'm late. Had to fight my way through the snow drifts and all. Leaving so soon, Ambrosia?

AMBROSIA. I'm off to labor 'neath the ramparts of Mother's chignon. If I'm not back in an hour, send a search party.

XAVIER. Yes, well, I daresay we will! Good grief, what's that fuzz all over your jacket, old chum? Looks like dog hair. *(Ambrosia turns to look.)*

HENRY. Dog hair? Why no, it must have come from the rabbits at the laboratory. I don't mind saying, I've grown quite fond of injecting rabbits with different diseases. Smallpox, influenza, it's remarkable how they all shriek with — *(Exit Ambrosia.)* I've got to speak with you in private!

XAVIER. Very well.

HENRY. It's a matter of the utmost importance!

XAVIER. Well, what is it?

HENRY. Not here. In the laboratory! *(A rack of bottles appears. They cross to it.)* Cousin Xavier.

XAVIER. Yes?

HENRY. Prepare yourself for a shock. You remember the experiments I told you I'd begun, into the chemical separation of good and evil?

XAVIER. I daresay it rings a bell.

HENRY. Well, I've done it! By George, I've done it! I've found the

chemical compound!

XAVIER. You don't mean to say —

HENRY. Xavier, do you know what I did tonight?

XAVIER. Sniffed far, far too much formaldehyde?

HENRY. I attacked a dog with my bare hands!

XAVIER. Attacked a dog?

HENRY. A Christmas dog, dressed up like old St. Nick!

XAVIER. Look here, this is all very alarming. You seem to be suffering from some sort of nervous condition. Perhaps a few days at the seashore would benefit —

HENRY. Oh, Xavier ... Poor, well-meaning, innocent, kind, pathetic, useless Xavier. Don't you see? Must I lead you by the nose like a camel through the dunes? Why, I've solved the problem of our dual nature! With this chemical compound I can separate the good from the evil in my own hopelessly divided self, and become purely one or the other!

XAVIER. But who on earth would want to be pure evil?

HENRY. All of us! Imagine being free to roam the world, shouting at strangers, kicking and biting, grabbing whatever you want with no inhibition, mowing down whoever gets in your way, no longer constrained by the rules of polite society ...

XAVIER. Good heavens! It sounds like being an American!

HENRY. And then afterwards free to return to the comfort of society, without guilt! Why, it's a dream! And I, Henry Jekyll, have discovered how to make that dream a reality! (*Five knocks at door.*)

Come in. (*Enter Ivy.*)

IVY. Dr. Jekyll, the dinner guests have arrived.

HENRY. Thank you. Tell them we'll be along shortly.

IVY. Very good, sir.

HENRY. Oh, and Ivy, there may be a gentleman in the laboratory from time to time, a Mr. Hyde. He'll be assisting me with some experiments and I've given him a key. Don't be alarmed if you see him here.

IVY. Yes, sir. I mean, no, sir. I won't be alarmed. Will there be anything else, sir?

HENRY. Not now. Run along! (*Exit Ivy.*)

XAVIER. Well, I certainly hope this Hyde fellow doesn't know about your experiments.

HENRY. Ha! I should say he does! Hyde's the name I've given my evil-doing twin! Clever, isn't it? Hyde, as in *hide*, the part that is

normally *hidden*? Oh Xavier, I don't expect you to understand the subtle genius of such things, but do say you'll keep it a secret, at least until I perfect the formula. It needs something else, something to make it even more evil ...

XAVIER. It seems awfully dangerous. What if something goes wrong? What if you get caught throwing puppies or kicking passers-by? I daresay your medical practice would suffer quite a setback.

HENRY. Oh, what do I care about all those head colds and broken arms when I'm on the brink of the greatest scientific discovery ever made! There is an evil beast lurking in our hearts, Xavier. You can feel him, can't you? Pacing to and fro, yearning for freedom, rattling his corpuscular cage ...

XAVIER. Good heavens!

HENRY. Well, I've taken hold of him! And soon, with some minor modifications, I'll be his master, able to unleash him at will and then leash him again with my own patented psychoactive elixir. I'll have the evil purged from our breasts and bottled on the shelf, and all the world will thank me! All of them!

XAVIER. Are you sure you need that potion, old chum? I must say, you're exceedingly evil without it.

HENRY. (*Crossing back to drawing room.*) Oh, this is nothing compared to my real evil side. Is my tie on straight? Miss Dewthistle is coming to dine.

XAVIER. (*Trying to recall her.*) Miss Dewthistle ... Miss Dewthistle ...

HENRY. (*Coaxing.*) Miss Dewthistle ...

XAVIER. Ah, Miss Dewthistle! (*Enter Ivy.*)

IVY. Miss Dewthistle! (*Enter Rosamunda Dewthistle.*)

AMBROSIA. (*Offstage.*) Miss Dewthistle! (*Enter Ambrosia, they embrace.*)

ROSAMUNDA. Miss Jekyll. Mr. Utrerson. Dr. Jekyll.

HENRY. Miss Dewthistle. (*Tense silence. His teacup trembles.*)

Xavier, did you know the cerebellum is connected to the frontal lobe by a —

AMBROSIA. Henry, Miss Dewthistle was telling me recently about her piano playing.

HENRY. Was she? (*Exit Ivy.*)

ROSAMUNDA. Why yes, actually, I was. Oh, I'm not much of a player, but my governess did teach me a few songs when I was a child. My mother had always wanted me to play, she herself being unable to touch the keys because of an allergy to ivory. Of course,

poor Mother is bedridden now, but I still play for her every afternoon, to ease her sufferings for a time.

AMBROSIA. Miss Dewthistle also plays for the children at the orphanage, knits blankets for the poor, writes poetry and retrieves injured birds from the wild and nurses them back to health.

HENRY. Good heavens, is there anything Miss Dewthistle doesn't do?

ROSAMUNDA. Well, I don't drink beer until I've had my breakfast. *(All aghast.)* It's a joke.

AMBROSIA. Oh, Miss Dewthistle's made a joke! Oh, isn't it funny! *(All force laughter.)*

XAVIER. Well done, Miss Dewthistle!

HENRY. Yes, yes! Quite funny! Oh, look, here's Mother. *(Laughter halts. Enter Euphronia and Lady Throckmortonshire.)*

EUPHRONIA. Do come and sit down, Lady Throckmortonshire. You must be exhausted from your exertions.

LADY T. Why yes, I'm practically dead on my feet. I look out on life, and see it all in the color of dung. *(Sneezes.)* Of course, my physician Dr. Clarridge-Hunt simply forbade me to go out in the cold air, but Penelope had to have her velveteen horse. *(Scrieks.)* Come in here, Penelope, and show them your horse! *(Enter Calliope, with prayer book.)*

CALLIOPE. Penelope's in the kitchen, Mother. She's chasing the cook with a fire poker.

LADY T. Mrs. Jekyll, might I trouble you for a chaise to collapse upon?

EUPHRONIA. You poor dear. Sink right down here on this settee. LADY T. Thank you so much. I'm afraid I must apologize. It appears my daughter Penelope is terrorizing your servants.

EUPHRONIA. Think nothing of it. They're as disposable as matchsticks.

CALLIOPE. Mother, may I sit quietly in the conservatory and study my prayer book?

LADY T. Of course, Calliope. Study to your little heart's content. At least the powers that be have granted me one devout child, Mrs. Jekyll. Pray tell me, do, why must a blessing be forever entwined with a curse? *(Sneezes. Exit Calliope.)*

EUPHRONIA. Lady Throckmortonshire, have you met Miss Rosamunda Dewthistle?

LADY T. I don't believe I've had the pleasure.

ROSAMUNDA. How do you do. That's a fascinating hat you have on.

LADY T. Why, thank you. I had it made especially. It is intended to suggest a flaming rose bush doused by a pitcher of cream. *(Enter Ivy with eggnog.)*

IVY. I've brought the eggnog, Madam.

AMBROSIA. Bring it here, Ivy.

IVY. Oh, and I'm sorry to trouble you, but there's a little girl throwing knives in the kitchen. Miss Plodgett's hiding in the pantry and won't come out.

EUPHRONIA. Good gracious! Henry, go and reprimand Plodgett, won't you?

HENRY. Yes, Mother.

LADY T. And do watch your fingers and toes. Penelope has a lethal bite. Of course the venom came from her father's side.

XAVIER. I'll go with you. You might need some assistance. *(Exit Henry and Xavier.)*

AMBROSIA. Lady Throckmortonshire, some eggnog?

LADY T. You dear girl.

ROSAMUNDA. Is your husband at sea, Lady Throckmortonshire? I believe I heard he was a ship's captain.

LADY T. At sea, yes. Always at sea. Just this morning I received a colossal crate from Cyprus full of goldish spears and mummified kittens. Our home is become a veritable mausoleum, but the man cannot be dissuaded from his trinkets. And you, young lady? I take it you are not betrothed?

ROSAMUNDA. Alas, no.

AMBROSIA. But she may be quite soon!

ROSAMUNDA. Oh, Miss Jekyll! Do stop! Do!

LADY T. Do I deduce a romance is at hand?

EUPHRONIA. There is a mutual understanding unfolding between my son and Miss Dewthistle.

LADY T. Ah, young love. One almost envies them, doesn't one? That we should all swoon about in love like patients under the ether, and never wake coughing and gasping for air. *(They recede. Xavier and Henry appear, atop stairs.)*

XAVIER. Ah, the famous fire poker. *(Picks it up.)* Our little she-devil can't be far ...

HENRY. Xavier, you must help me with Miss Dewthistle.

XAVIER. Help you? What do you mean, help you?

HENRY. I mean, you must help me talk to her. Ambrosia insists on throwing us together and I have no idea what to say to her!

XAVIER. Well, why don't you talk about the things women like to talk about?

HENRY. Such as?

XAVIER. Oh, I'm no expert, old man. But I believe they generally talk about hats and flowers.

HENRY. Hats and flowers, hats and flowers. That will be something of a challenge. *(Enter Penelope, bottom of stairs, with stuffed horse.)* Ah, there's the little troublemaker! Young lady, a word, if you please?

PENELOPE. What do you want?

HENRY. I'm afraid it's about the knife-throwing. As this is my house you're in —

PENELOPE. No, it's not. It's my house!

HENRY. Well, no it isn't, Penelope, which is why you can't go around chasing cooks with pokers.

PENELOPE. Who's he?

HENRY. That's my cousin Xavier, but don't interrupt, Penelope — *(She growls and bites him, holds on.)* Owl! I mean, truly! Owl! Hit her with the poker! The poker!

XAVIER. *(Pulls Penelope off.)* Now listen, little girl, you mustn't go around biting people. *(She kicks him, twice.)* Owl! Owl!

PENELOPE. You stupid thimble! Go thuff yourthelf in a thip and think! *(She kicks Henry for good measure.)*

HENRY. Owl! *(Exit Penelope.)*

XAVIER. Good God! Did you hear what that little hellion called me?

HENRY. A stupid thimble.

XAVIER. I haven't been through three years of medical school to be called thupid!

HENRY. I'd worry more about being called a thimble if I were you.

XAVIER. Yes, I see your point.

HENRY. Xavier.

XAVIER. Yes?

HENRY. Our encounter with that miniature harpy has given me an idea. Perhaps a drop of blood from that violent little girl is just what I need to complete my potion.

XAVIER. You don't mean you're going to —

HENRY. Oh, no no no, I'm not going to kill her. I'm merely going to jab her with a streak knife. And you're going to help me! Now,

now, don't protest — we must go to the laboratory and collect the vials! *(They exit. The ladies reappear.)*

AMBROSIA. More eggnog. Miss Dewthistle?

ROSAMUNDA. Just a bit. If I have any more I daresay my judgment will be affected! I might even propose to your brother myself!

AMBROSIA. Now that you mention it, that may be just what is required! *(Hiccups.)*

EUPHRONIA. Ambrosia, I believe you've drunk too much eggnog.

AMBROSIA. Well, why shouldn't she take the initiative? Henry's so overcome with nerves he can't put together a sentence in her presence. Why shouldn't she propose?

EUPHRONIA. Lady Throckmortonshire, perhaps you can talk some sense into my daughter?

LADY T. I believe there are certain instances when a lady is justified in approaching a gentleman. If, for instance, he is mortally wounded in battle and bleeding to death, or if he is paralyzed by illness and unable to speak.

AMBROSIA. But what are we ladies to do? Sit about and wait our whole lives? One feels like a ripe peach dangling from a tree.

ROSAMUNDA. My gracious!

LADY T. A ripe ... what?

AMBROSIA. A plum! A pomegranate! A red fruit bursting with little red seeds!

EUPHRONIA. Do not be alarmed, Lady Throckmortonshire. My daughter absorbed these dreadful self-expressions on her trip to the continent.

LADY T. Ah, the continent. I've never ventured there myself, but I imagine the worst.

ROSAMUNDA. Oh, it isn't so dreadful as that. I myself visited Spain this spring, on a mission to hand out soap cakes to the poor. The Spanish gentlemen were extremely ... agreeable.

AMBROSIA. Agreeable? Do tell us more!

ROSAMUNDA. Well, there was one, I recall, who came to my window and sang a song. When I opened it to toss out a soap cake, he gave me ... a rabbit's skin.

EUPHRONIA. A rabbit's skin!

ROSAMUNDA. Yes. A soft, warm rabbit's skin, brown with white tufts. You see, he was a hunter.

LADY T. My word — like a scene from the Grecian theater. It's a wonder you weren't impaled. *(Rosamunda pulls Ambrosia aside.)*

ROSAMUNDA. Have you spoken with him? Dare I ask what was his response?

AMBROSIA. My brother admires you greatly. Of that you may be sure.

ROSAMUNDA. And did he mention marriage?

AMBROSIA. In passing, yes. Unfortunately his attention was diverted by the arrival of our cousin. But I believe he is working up to a proposal.

ROSAMUNDA. Oh, Miss Jekyll, this is too wonderful! If you only knew how ... how important it is to me that we should be wed by April.

AMBROSIA. I must confess that my brother, while ripe for marriage, has some unfortunate tendencies which should be taken into account.

ROSAMUNDA. Oh, I do not mind tendencies. I do not mind them at all.

AMBROSIA. These are not the usual tendencies, I'm afraid. He has rather a proclivity for cadavers.

ROSAMUNDA. Good heavens!

AMBROSIA. Not in any unnatural sense. He merely fancies talking about them —

ROSAMUNDA. No. I mean, good heavens, there's a little girl knocking at the window!

AMBROSIA. Oh yes, so there is.

CALLIOPE. (*Outside window.*) Help!

LADY T. Oh, dear!

EUPHRONIA. Don't worry, Lady Throckmortonshire, I'll ring for the maid. We'll have the window open in no time. (*Rings bell.*)

AMBROSIA. (*At window.*) Don't bother. Henry's gone out to retrieve her.

ROSAMUNDA. Yes, though she appears to be running away from him.

AMBROSIA. Perhaps you might draw a lesson here. My brother loves nothing so much as a rousing chase!

ROSAMUNDA. (*Laughing.*) Oh, Miss Jekyll! I shall have to don my earmuffs and race off through the snow! (*Both laugh. A body hits the window. It is Calliope — she begs to be let in. Ambrosia raises the window and they pull her inside in a gust of snow.*)

LADY T. Calliope, my dear! You're chilled to the bone!

CALLIOPE. (*Breathless.*) He's chasing me ... with a knife ...

(*Henry appears in the window.*)

HENRY. Ah, there you are, little girl. Well done. Now, this time I'll hide and you and Xavier can hunt for me. (*Calling off.*) Olly-olly-oxenfree!

EUPHRONIA. Henry, really. Cavorting outdoors in this weather. The poor girl doesn't have a coat on.

HENRY. Oh, not to worry. Penelope's strong as a cart horse. (*Pulls her to him.*)

CALLIOPE. I'm not Penelope. I'm Calliope.

LADY T. Please, Dr. Jekyll. She has a weak heart and an undersized spleen. (*Enter Xavier.*)

XAVIER. Did I hear someone call olly-oxen-free? I was hidden in the grandfather clock and — (*Sees Calliope and gasps.*)

AMBROSIA. No, no. It's the good one.

XAVIER. Ah.

HENRY. I'm afraid the games are over. It appears we've mistaken our quarry.

XAVIER. Yes, I see. (*Enter Ivy.*)

IVY. Excuse me, Madam. I heard the bell ring but I was all the way down in the — (*She sees Calliope and gasps.*)

XAVIER. No, no, it's the good one.

IVY. Oh.

AMBROSIA. Miss Dewtistisle, come along and let Henry escort you to the table.

ROSAMUNDA. Why, it would be my pleasure, Dr. Jekyll. I trust I shall be safe in your hands? (*Rosamunda places her hand in Henry's. Lights down.*)

Scene 2

A dinner table, tall enough for the actors to stand at. All are laughing.

HENRY. Quite so, Mother, quite so. Though I dare say, Lady Bufordsmith could put down a naive uprising with one stomp of her be-slippered foot.

LADY T. I was her bridesmaid, you know. And she was not a slim girl then.

EUPHRONIA. Personally, I bear no ill-will towards the native. If I ever met one I should extend my hand without hesitation.

XAVIER. And I expect he should, without hesitation, lop it off.

HENRY. Exactly so. You may bear no ill-will towards them, but they certainly do towards you.

LADY T. Oh, indeed. Indeed, they do.

ROSAMUNDA. Now why should that be so? One would think they'd admire us, and be glad of our presence there. We are, after all, shepherding them from the darkness into the light.

XAVIER. I believe it is precisely our light which they so despise.

ROSAMUNDA. Pray, explain yourself, Mr. Uterson.

XAVIER. I refer to the light of science and reason. The primitive mind is not like yours and mine, Miss Dewhistle. It is steeped in mythic lore and ancient rites. It will not be parted from its evil demons.

EUPHRONIA. My word!

HENRY. Quite so. Though I must disagree on one point. For I believe we too contain the blood of the ancients, and therefore, our own capacity for evil.

LADY T. Surely, you can't mean we are the same as these barbarians, Dr. Jekyll. After all, it is we who educate them in the process of civilization.

HENRY. Is it? Is it really? Or is it rather that we are the more barbaric, for the fact that we conquer and subjugate them and then, in our vanity, call it education? No, Lady Throckmortonshire, I believe all men are capable of evil, that evil is bound up with our very existence, born at the wellspring of our being, coursing through our very veins. Is this not the lesson of science? That life must everywhere perpetuate itself by destruction, by death? We should not be of this world were good and evil not twined together within us, as a snake which swallows its tail ... (*Murmurs of disgust.*)

ROSAMUNDA. Dr. Jekyll, you say all men are capable of evil. Do you include ladies in that category, as well?

HENRY. Indeed, I had never thought of it. I'm afraid ladies do not figure in the equations of science.

ROSAMUNDA. What a pity. I should rather like to have been thought capable of something.

LADY T. Evil, evil and more evil. Pray let us talk of something

else, before we begin to dance rings around a firepit. Did I tell you I intend to visit Shropshire this spring?

EUPHRONIA. Oh, how marvelous. My dear husband always used to say, "There's nothing like looking at a sheep on a hill."

(*Awkward clearing of throats.*)

AMBROSIA. Oh, dear. I've dropped my napkin under the table.

HENRY. Allow me. (*He ducks under table for napkin. Ambrosia joins him.*)

AMBROSIA. Henry, you must stop nattering on about snakes and pay attention to Miss Dewhistle. She thinks you're ignoring her.

(*He coughs.*)

HENRY. Ambrosia, have you been drinking eggnog?

AMBROSIA. That's beside the point.

PLODGETT. Bit more pudding, Dr. Jekyll?

HENRY. (*Comes back up.*) Why, yes, thank you. Miss Dewhistle,

I ...

ROSAMUNDA. Yes, Dr. Jekyll?

HENRY. I believe I saw some chrysanthemums today.

ROSAMUNDA. Chrysanthemums?

HENRY. Yes.

ROSAMUNDA. How charming. I adore chrysanthemums. Pink ones especially.

HENRY. Well, as a matter of fact these chrysanthemums were grey. ROSAMUNDA. Grey? That's rather unusual, isn't it?

HENRY. Well, these were not your typical chrysanthemums. You see, they'd been etherized. Preserved in a bottle. Sometimes in the laboratory the lads go a bit, well ... you know, with the formaldehyde and handling the cadavers and ... Speaking of which, Xavier, did you know you can slice straight through the solar plexus and go right to the — (*Ambrosia kicks him.*) Ow! (*Awkward pause.*) My word, is that a butterfly under the table?

CALLIOPE. A butterfly? I love butterflies. (*She goes under table.*)

(*Henry joins her.*)

HENRY. Now, listen here, Penelope.

CALLIOPE. I'm Calliope.

HENRY. Whoever you are, the point is I need a tiny drop of blood from your sister's finger and I wonder if you might help me.

CALLIOPE. Oh, I couldn't do anything to hurt Penelope. That would be dreadful.

HENRY. It wouldn't hurt her if it were done quickly. Here, I'll

give you a shilling to poke her with a harpin.

CALLIOPE. No! I won't do it.

HENRY. Now listen, you little pest. I'm a doctor and I need that blood very badly for an experiment.

EUPHRONIA. *(Comes under table.)* Henry, what's going on under here?

HENRY. Nothing at all. We were just talking about butterflies.

CALLIOPE. That isn't true. We were talking about blood.

EUPHRONIA. This is very strange. People are starting to wonder if something's the matter.

ROSAMUNDA. *(Comes under table.)* Is something the matter? Why is everyone under the table?

EUPHRONIA. Henry was just helping Penelope find her harpin.

CALLIOPE. I'm Calliope. I'm going to go finish my cabbage now. *(Comes back up.)*

AMBROSIA. *(Comes under table.)* Well, well, what's going on under here? Henry, did you know Miss Dewthistle's been to Italy?

ROSAMUNDA. It was Spain, actually.

AMBROSIA. She visited a mosque and threw crumbs to pigeons.

HENRY. Really, Ambrosia. Couldn't we talk about this later?

XAVIER. *(Comes under table.)* Are you going to eat that last bit of ham on your plate, old chum? Because if you aren't ...

HENRY. Yes, yes. Go ahead.

LADY T. *(Comes under table.)* Whatever is going on down here? Are we playing parlor games?

EUPHRONIA. No, Lady Throckmortonshire. We're discussing Spain.

LADY T. In the old days, we'd play musical chairs until we parnted like fox-hounds.

PLODGETT. *(Comes under table.)* Will you be wanting the dessert now, Madam?

EUPHRONIA. Yes, Plodgett.

PLODGETT. And will you be wanting it under the table or on top of it? *(Penelope comes under table.)*

EUPHRONIA. On top of it! For God's sake! Pardon me, Calliope.

PENELOPE. I'm Penelope. *(All scream and go back above table.)*

LADY T. Penelope, my dear. Come and sit by Mother.

HENRY. Well, I believe I'll have some more ham. Anyone else care for a slice? *(Stabs his knife into the table by Penelope's hand. She cries out and moves it just in time.)*

AMBROSIA. Henry!

HENRY. Oh, blast. I didn't nick you, did I, Penelope? Come, let's have a look ...

LADY T. Never mind, Dr. Jekyll, it's only a scratch.

HENRY. Oh, you can't be too careful these days. You know how infectious spring up at the slightest opportunity. In fact, I see several signs of disease already. *(He pursues Penelope around table.)*

EUPHRONIA. Henry, this is very odd. Couldn't you schedule an appointment?

HENRY. And risk the poor child's health? Goodness, no. These things can be fatal if they aren't dealt with in time. Come along, Penelope, there's a girl ...

PENELOPE. You thray away fwom me! I'll thcwear! *(She climbs on table. Henry grabs her.)*

HENRY. I've got her! Xavier, help me hold her!

XAVIER. *(Climbs on table and restrains her.)* Hurry up! She's got the strength of a wild animal!

HENRY. Now then, this won't hurt a bit! *(He jabs her finger with a syringe.)*

PENELOPE. It hurrrh! It hurrrh! Make him thropt!

HENRY. *(Withdrawing needle.)* I've got it!

XAVIER. Well done! *(Penelope kicks Xavier in leg, punches Henry in the stomach.)*

HENRY. *(Doubled over.)* Well then, I'll just take this down to the laboratory and run a few tests.

AMBROSIA. But Miss Dewthistle's still here!

HENRY. Oh, yes, forgive me. Good night, Miss Dewthistle. *(Exit Henry.)*

ROSAMUNDA. Good night, Dr. Jekyll.

AMBROSIA. He really isn't himself tonight. You must come tomorrow for tea.

ROSAMUNDA. Are you sure?

AMBROSIA. Don't worry! I'll have it all straightened out by then, and I'll make sure you have some time alone together. Be here at three o'clock!

ROSAMUNDA. Well, all right, if you really think I should ...

XAVIER. I'll see you home, Miss Dewthistle. *(Exit Xavier and Rosamunda.)*

LADY T. Thank you for a remarkable evening, Mrs. Jekyll. We'll call again tomorrow for the results of the medical tests. Penelope!

Calliope! (*Calliope appears partially from wing, clutching prayer book.*)
CALLIOPE. Here I am, Mother! Ouch! Penelope, please don't bite me. Ouch! (*An arm pulls her into wing. Penelope appears, with horse.*)
PENELOPE. I don't want to go home.
LADY T. Nonsense. We must get you to bed so you can recover.
PENELOPE. I'm not thick!
LADY T. You are infected, my dear. The doctor said so. Now, let your sister go! (*Penelope gives her a raspberry, returns to wing.*)
CALLIOPE. (*Offstage.*) We'd better hurry along Penelope, we don't want to miss our bedtime. Ouch!
PENELOPE. (*Offstage.*) Oh look, a prayer book!
CALLIOPE. No, Penelope, please! Not my prayer book! Please! (*She is shoved onstage, then runs back off. Laughter and ripping of pages. Pages fly onstage. A loud slap, a cry and a thud. Calliope appears from wing.*) I'm sorry, Mother. It seems I've coshed Penelope on the chin.
LADY T. Well, let that be a lesson to her. One can't tamper with nice, old books just for fun and get away with it.

Scene 3

Henry at his rack of bottles. The other characters appear for their lines, then recede.

HENRY. Well then, alone at last, and only 2:30 in the morning, with a full moon just outside the window. Whatever shall I do tonight? I could tidy up my rows of beakers and vials. I could arrange my collection of bones and organs in alphabetical order. Or, I could mix three parts nitroglycerin with two parts petroleum sulfide, add this drop of blood and become evil incarnate. (*Begins mixing potion.*)
XAVIER. Henry, what if something goes wrong?
HENRY. Yes, well, I suppose something could go wrong. But right now it all seems worth it to unlock the eternal mystery of the universe.
AMBROSIA. You have to marry and have children! Before your hair drops out!
HENRY. I can do that later! There's plenty of time to marry after

I'm through with my experiments.
ROSAMUNDA. But what about Miss Dewthistle? Someone else might marry her!
HENRY. Well, if someone else marries Miss Dewthistle I'll just drink a quart or two of this stuff and chop them up with a pick-axe! (*Laughs. The spectres are appalled.*) Now, everyone be quiet so I can concentrate. Let's see, three parts nitroglycerin, and what was next? Ah, yes, two parts petroleum sulfide. Nasty stuff, that. Better not get any on the shirt cuffs. Right, now add this drop of blood and there we have it! Ruthless, unthinking evil in a glass. Well, bottoms up! (*Drinks. Waits. Waits more. Waits even more. Looks at pocket watch. Gives up. Turns. Spasms. Spasms and contortions build exponentially, until he transforms into Hyde.*)
HYDE. A mirror. A mirror ... (*He looks at himself in a glass.*) I believe the extirpewiment hath been a thucceheth.

Scene 4

A path in the park. Enter Plodgett, with basket, humming. Enter Constable, opposite.

PLODGETT. Mornin', Constable!
CONSTABLE. Good mornin', Miss. Have you seen any strange characters lurkin' about?
PLODGETT. Strange characters? Why, no, I haven't. But I did see a bird with only one foot.
CONSTABLE. I'm afraid we're not lookin' for any birds. We're lookin' for a criminal.
PLODGETT. A criminal! You don't say! What did he do?
CONSTABLE. Oh, he's been terrorizin' the neighborhood all through the wee hours of the mornin'. He pushed a baby carriage into a fountain and got the baby damp, chased a cat up a tree ... He even trampled an old woman's Christmas wreath.
PLODGETT. No!
CONSTABLE. Ay.
PLODGETT. Well, that's the English for you. It doesn't take but a

wee push to send them off the deep end, if you know what I mean.

CONSTABLE. Oh, you don't have to tell me. I'm from Ireland.

PLODGETT. Are you now? Well, I thought so by your accent.

You know, my sister Marjorie married an Irishman.

CONSTABLE. Did she now? *(Enter Police Lieutenant.)*

LIEUTENANT. Constable! What are you doing standing around gabbling with nursemaids! We've got a criminal to apprehend!

CONSTABLE. Sir, I was interviewin' a passer-by to see if she'd seen anything!

LIEUTENANT. Well, had she?

CONSTABLE. Only a bird with one foot, sir.

LIEUTENANT. A bird with one foot? *(Slaps Constable back and forth across face.)* Constable, I want you to blow that whistle and start running around looking like you're doing something! We've got a violent criminal on the loose!

CONSTABLE. Yes, sir! *(Blows whistle and exits.)*

LIEUTENANT. And you'd better be on your way, Miss, before you get attacked. *(Exit Lieutenant.)*

PLODGETT. Oh, he won't dare mess with me, that one. I've got the blood of the Scots in me, and I'll give him what for. *(Enter Ivy.)*

IVY. Miss Plodgett! Miss Plodgett!

PLODGETT. Ivy, whatever are you doing out here?

IVY. It's Dr. Jekyll! He didn't come home last night!

PLODGETT. Couldn't you have waited 'til I got back from the market to tell me?

IVY. Well, you also forgot your handkerchief. I thought you might get a runny nose in the cold air.

PLODGETT. Well, isn't that the sweetest thing you ever heard. Ivy, you're as dear as a little lamb, you are. Now get yourself on home before the murderer attacks you.

IVY. The what?

PLODGETT. Haven't you heard? There's a murderer runnin' wild in the streets. He's already killed a baby. Drowned her in a fountain!

IVY. Oh! *(Enter Hyde, limping with cane. They see him and cling together.)*

PLODGETT. That's him.

IVY. Who?

PLODGETT. The murderer!

IVY. Are you sure?

PLODGETT. Ay! He's the same one as killed the wee dog on the

steps!

IVY. What should we do?

PLODGETT. I don't know. All of a sudden my knees have gone to hags!

IVY. Maybe if we stand very still he won't notice us.

HYDE. Hello, laddie.

IVY. Oh, no. We've got to run! Run, Plodgett, run! *(Exit Plodgett and Ivy, bumping into Lady T and Calliope. Calliope carries balloons.)*

LADY T. Watch where you're going, you imbecles! Are you hurt, Calliope?

CALLIOPE. No, I'm all right. I'm only glad they didn't hurt these balloons we got for Penelope. Do you think she'll like them very much?

LADY T. I'm sure she will. When one is bedridden with disease one undoubtedly appreciates any distraction from the shame of one's condition. Well, there's an unattractive young man. Whatever is he doing tossing those crumbs around?

HYDE. *(Throwing crumbs.)* Here, pidgie pidgie pidgie. I have thome bweadewumth for you.

CALLIOPE. He's only feeding the pigeons. And he has a lisp just like poor Penelope. Couldn't we make friends with him? Perhaps he's lonely.

LADY T. All right, but we must only befriend him for a moment. If anyone should pass by we must pretend not to know him.

CALLIOPE. Hello, sir.

HYDE. Hello, little girl.

CALLIOPE. I like pigeons, too. Sometimes I save my breakfast bun to throw to them.

HYDE. Ith that tho? How fathinaning. Would you like to help me feed the pigeonth now?

CALLIOPE. All right. Here, pidgie pidgie pidgie! Here, pidgie pidgie! *(Pigeon lands beside them.)* Oh look, a poor crippled pigeon with one foot.

HYDE. Yeth, the poor little thing. Why don't we put it out of irth mithery! *(He attacks pigeon with cane. Feathers fly.)*

CALLIOPE. Mother, he's hitting the crippled pigeon!

LADY T. Stop it, you beast! Oh, look away, Calliope, look away!

HYDE. Well, now, what nexth? Ah yeth, the balloonth! I've alwayth hated balloonth!

LADY T. You wouldn't dare!

CALLIOPE. Please sir, not my colored balloons!

LADY T. Look away, Calliope. Look away! (*Hyde pops balloons with his cane. Police whistles, off.*)

CONSTABLE. (*Offstage.*) This way, Lieutenant! (*Enter Constable and Lieutenant.*)

LIEUTENANT. There's the scoundrel!

CONSTABLE. Careful, he's got a pointy cane! (*Swordfight between Hyde and Lieutenant. Hyde stabs Lieutenant. Exit Hyde.*)

LIEUTENANT. (*Bleeding profusely.*) He's got me in the heart, O'Malley. The scoundrel ...

CONSTABLE. You'll pull through, Lieutenant! Hang on!

LIEUTENANT. There's no use pretending. I'm bleeding like a struck pig. No pun intended.

CONSTABLE. None taken, sir.

LIEUTENANT. Well, you can have my billy club, Constable. Take good care of it. And always remember, you have to hit people on the soft spot at the top of the head, otherwise you'll crack the varnish.

CONSTABLE. Yes, sir. (*Lieutenant dies. Constable stands, salutes.*)

There never was a finer example of a policeman.

CALLIOPE. Mother, shouldn't I look away?

LADY T. No dear, this time you may point and gawk in fascination.

End of Act One

ACT TWO

Ivy and Plodgett sit in drawing room, drinking tea.

IVY. Do you think the murderer saw where we live, Miss Plodgett? PLODGETT. Good heavens no. He's too busy killin' babies and policemen to worry about the likes of us. Pass the crumpets.

IVY. I heard from the dressmaker that he carries an axe around with him, to chop people up and turn them into pot pies, and sell them at the market for three shillings, tuppence.

PLODGETT. It just goes to show: You can't believe a bit of what you hear these days.

IVY. But she heard it from the butcher's wife. And she knows all about chopping things up!

PLODGETT. Listen to me, Ivy. There's some people who take a strange delight in scarin' the bejeezus out of others. They'll take a story and add their own embroiderings to it, until it bears no resemblance to the original at all. Now what were you doin' talkin' to the dressmaker?

IVY. She was here to fit Miss Ambrosia's dress for the wedding.

PLODGETT. The wedding. And whose wedding might that be?

IVY. Dr. Jekyll's. He's getting married to Miss Dewthistle. (*Enter Hyde behind them, unseen. During the following, he pulls various weapons from his pockets to murder them with — i.e., a piece of rope, which he can't get a knot out of, a stick of dynamite and matches which won't light.*)

PLODGETT. You don't say.

IVY. Miss Ambrosia told me. Of course, I wasn't supposed to tell anyone.

PLODGETT. Why ever not?

IVY. Because Dr. Jekyll doesn't know it yet.

PLODGETT. Well now, how can Dr. Jekyll be gettin' married and not know it?

IVY. I'm not sure. But Miss Ambrosia said as soon as they're married we'll be moving to a house with a fountain.

PLODGETT. A fountain! Won't that be grand!

IVY. Except that Dr. Jekyll didn't come home last night. Maybe he was chopped up and made into pot pie!

PLODGETT. Ivy, haven't you heard a word I've been sayin' to you? IVY. Well then, where is he? He hasn't even been home for lunch, and he always comes home for lunch.

PLODGETT. Maybe he went to Mr. Utrerson's house. You know they often sit up late talking about diseases, and he must have got tired and fell asleep.

IVY. But Mr. Utrerson called earlier, and said he hadn't seen him.

PLODGETT. Well, that is a mystery then? Where do you suppose he could have gone to? *(Hyde drops stick of dynamite.)* Oh Ivy, you've dropped something.

IVY. I have?

PLODGETT. It's right here under the sofa. I can't quite reach it ... *(They bend to retrieve it. Hyde reaches over them, takes butter knife. He attempts to sharpen it during the following. Plodgett hands Ivy the dynamite.)* There you are.

IVY. Thank you.

PLODGETT. Well then, if you ask me there's only one solution. He must have been called out on a medical case. Maybe he had to tend to one of the victims.

IVY. Do you think so?

PLODGETT. Oh, I'm sure of it. Why, who would they call but Dr. Jekyll? There's no better physician in all of London! *(Hyde spasms and drops knife. He begins to transform back into Jekyll.)*

IVY. Miss Plodgett?

PLODGETT. Yes, Ivy?

IVY. Did you hear that noise?

PLODGETT. Yes, I did. It sounded like a piece of cutlery clattering to the floor.

IVY. Mhm. Did you drop any cutlery?

PLODGETT. Why no, I thought you did.

IVY. No, Miss Plodgett. And I didn't drop any dynamite either! *(They leap to their feet, see Henry.)*

PLODGETT. Dr. Jekyll! We didn't hear you come in!

HENRY. I'm sorry. I must have forgotten to say hello.

IVY. Are you all right, Dr. Jekyll?

HENRY. Yes, I'm all right. Though I'm afraid I'm rather tired at the moment.

PLODGETT. Were you out on a case, sir?

HENRY. Yes, that's it. An extremely exhausting case. Now, if you'd be so good as to bring me a blanket I believe I'll go to sleep right here for several days. Pull the curtains shut, would you? *(Enter Ambrosia.)*

AMBROSIA. Henry! What are you doing lying down? Miss Dewhistle will be here in ten minutes!

HENRY. Oh no, I can't possibly see Miss Dewhistle this afternoon. I've got to sleep. Sleep ...

AMBROSIA. Oh, no you don't. You're going to get up right now and prepare to be charming. Plodgett, get him some tea.

PLODGETT. Yes, Miss. *(Exit Plodgett.)*

AMBROSIA. Ivy, come over here and help me clean him up.

IVY. Yes, Miss!

HENRY. I must say this matchmaking of yours is becoming a tad annoying.

AMBROSIA. I'm only helping nature take its course.

HENRY. Well, why don't you help nature somewhere else? You could plant a tree, for example. Or neuter the stray cats in the park.

IVY. What should I do with all these pigeon feathers, Miss?

AMBROSIA. Oh, I don't know — just hide them somewhere. Now Henry, it took a great deal of work to get Miss Dewhistle to come at all after your terrible behavior last night. *(During the following, Ivy looks for a place to hide feathers, puts them in Henry's pocket, finds a bloody handkerchief there, and faints.)*

HENRY. I don't see what was so terrible about it.

AMBROSIA. You ran screaming around the dinner table and attacked a ten-year-old.

HENRY. Rubbish! I didn't run, I walked quickly.

AMBROSIA. Whether you ran or not is hardly the point!

HENRY. Well *my* point is that you always exaggerate.

AMBROSIA. I do not.

HENRY. Oh, yes you do. And not only that, you pronounce words wrong. Schadenfreude, for example.

AMBROSIA. I do not. I say schadenfreud just like everyone else.

HENRY. There, you see? You've left off the last syllable!

AMBROSIA. That's how you're supposed to say it!

HENRY. No, it isn't. I bet you don't even know what schadenfreude is.

AMBROSIA. Oh, yes I do. A schadenfreud is a German crumbcake.

HENRY. Wrong! That's lebkuche. Schadenfreude is joy at another's

pair. (*Ivy faints.*) Good heavens, Ivy's fallen on the floor. (*Fine knocks at door.*)

AMBROSIA. Come in!

HENRY. Ivy? Can you hear me? (*Enter Xavier.*)

XAVIER. Forgive the intrusion, I was in the neighborhood and I — (*Sees Ivy on floor.*) Good God, man! What have you done?

HENRY. It wasn't me. The poor girl's had a fainting spell. Help me get her up!

IVY. (*Delirious.*) Pot pies ... pot pies ...

XAVIER. She's saying "pot pies." She must be half-starved!

AMBROSIA. Let's get her down to the kitchen. (*They pick her up.*)

ROSAMUNDA. (*Offstage.*) Hello? Is anyone at home? The door was open!

XAVIER. Good heavens, it's Miss Dewthistle!

AMBROSIA. We can't let her know the maid's fainted from hunger — it looks immoral!

HENRY. Oh, and what do you suggest we do? Hide the maid behind the curtain? (*They nod in agreement.*)

AMBROSIA. Well be right there, Miss Dewthistle! Xavier, go and stall her! (*Exit Xavier. The Jekylls struggle to hide Ivy behind curtain during the following.*)

XAVIER. (*Offstage.*) Hello, Miss Dewthistle!

ROSAMUNDA. Hello, Mr. Utrerson. Are the Jekylls at home?

XAVIER. Yes, they are.

ROSAMUNDA. Well, might I see them?

XAVIER. Certainly. As soon as you're ready.

ROSAMUNDA. I believe I'm ready now, Mr. Utrerson.

XAVIER. Are you?

ROSAMUNDA. Yes, I am.

XAVIER. Well, all right. Look here, why don't we go in and see them, then?

ROSAMUNDA. That would be lovely.

XAVIER. Wonderful. I believe they're in there. Here we are, coming into the drawing room ... (*Henry and Ambrosia sit, produce playing cards. Enter Xavier and Rosamunda.*)

HENRY. Ah, Miss Dewthistle. How nice to see you.

ROSAMUNDA. Hello, Dr. Jekyll. Miss Jekyll.

AMBROSIA. Why don't you take my place in the game?

ROSAMUNDA. All right. What are you playing?

AMBROSIA. Whist.

HENRY. Beggar My Neighbor. (*Ambrosia hits him, cards fly.*) We hadn't decided.

AMBROSIA. I'll go see about getting some tea. (*Enter Plodgett.*)

PLODGETT. The tea's ready, Miss. Shall I serve it in here?

AMBROSIA. (*Hushed.*) Forget the tea! You've got to help me with Ivy!

PLODGETT. (*Sees Ivy's legs beneath curtain.*) Oh, mercy! (*Henry coughs as a distraction.*)

ROSAMUNDA. Are you all right, Dr. Jekyll?

HENRY. Oh, yes, just a scratchy throat. (*Ambrosia and Plodgett struggle to move Ivy.*)

ROSAMUNDA. I had a scratchy throat myself earlier. I believe it's the fog which is to blame.

HENRY. Ah, the fog, the dastardly fog. If only we could make it all go away.

XAVIER. Perhaps we should take your temperature.

HENRY. Good idea. (*Puts Xavier's hand to his head.*)

XAVIER. I meant Miss Dewthistle's.

HENRY. Better idea. (*Puts his hand over her eyes.*)

ROSAMUNDA. I assure you I feel quite healthy.

HENRY. Yes, so you are. She seems quite healthy. (*A commotion as Ivy is dropped.*) Good heavens, look over there!

ROSAMUNDA. Where?

HENRY. Over there!

ROSAMUNDA. There?

HENRY. (*Throws down a card.*) Oh blast, I've dropped my joker. Would you be so kind?

ROSAMUNDA. Why, certainly, Dr. Jekyll. (*She bends for card. He throws down another and another. She pursues these. Ambrosia and Plodgett exit carrying Ivy. Rosamunda hands Henry the cards.*)

HENRY. Thank you so much. Would you excuse my cousin and I for a moment? (*Henry and Xavier step aside.*) Xavier, you mustn't leave us alone.

XAVIER. Why not?

HENRY. I feel a bit strange.

XAVIER. Yes, I dare say you look a bit strange.

HENRY. (*Starts to spasm.*) Oh, no. It can't be!

XAVIER. What's happening?

HENRY. I think ... Good heavens, I'm turning into him!

XAVIER. Who? Him? Now?

HENRY. Yes! Quick — distract her while I get the antidote! *(Exit Henry.)*

XAVIER. Miss Dewthistle, would you care for a game of piquet?

ROSAMUNDA. Well, all right. Where's Dr. Jekyll going?

XAVIER. He's going to walk the dog.

ROSAMUNDA. I thought they had a cat.

XAVIER. I meant cat. Shall I deal?

ROSAMUNDA. Well, now that we're alone, Mr. Utrerson, there's something I'd rather like to ask you.

XAVIER. Yes? *(Enter Hyde. Rosamunda crosses downstage. Throughout the following Hyde pursues Xavier and they fight without her noticing.)*

ROSAMUNDA. It's about Dr. Jekyll. As his closest friend I expect you know him as well as anyone.

XAVIER. I suppose so.

ROSAMUNDA. It's just that he's so difficult to understand, sometimes he seems to be fond of me and at others, well it's almost as though he doesn't care for me at all.

XAVIER. Oh, really? Do go on.

ROSAMUNDA. Well, last night for instance. He seemed to be interested in talking to me but then after dinner he fled with barely a goodbye. Of course, he must have a great deal on his mind as a physician, but still, one imagines he'd set that aside if he were truly fond of me. Oh, Mr. Utrerson, this is all so foolish. Perhaps I should just give up. Tell me, do you think so? *(She turns to him. He shows Hyde behind sofa.)*

XAVIER. Well, at this point it might be wise to consider other offers. *(She turns away. Hyde stands, knocks Xavier on the head with a club. Xavier falls to floor. Hyde sneaks up behind Rosamunda with club, then stops, spasms. He turns back into Jekyll by the end of her speech.)*

ROSAMUNDA. But that's just it — I'm not interested in other offers. Of course, there haven't been other offers yet, but even if there were I feel sure my affections would not swerve. Surely you understand, there comes a time in a young lady's life when she simply must marry, when her reputation frankly depends upon it! If only you could persuade him to take action, I'm sure he would listen to you. Oh please, Mr. Utrerson, tell me you'll speak to — *(Turns.)* Dr. Jekyll!

HENRY. Miss Dewthistle! Help me get him up!

ROSAMUNDA. What happened?

HENRY. I'm not sure — he seems to have collapsed. *(They haul Xavier to sofa and seat him between them, unconscious. His head rests*

on Henry's shoulder.)

ROSAMUNDA. Oh, Dr. Jekyll, I'm afraid I've been speaking rather indiscreetly. Do say you didn't overhear me.

HENRY. Why yes, Miss Dewthistle, I did overhear you. And what's more, I was glad to. *(Looking into her eyes, he gives Xavier's head a push, it falls to her shoulder.)*

ROSAMUNDA. You were? *(She pushes it back to him.)*

HENRY. You see, there's something I've been meaning to say to you, too, Miss Dewthistle. *(He pushes the head back.)*

ROSAMUNDA. There is? *(She returns it.)*

HENRY. Yes. *(He sends it back.)*

ROSAMUNDA. Oh, Dr. Jekyll! *(Showing Xavier out of the way.)*

HENRY. Oh, Miss Dewthistle! *(Starts to kiss her, stops himself.)* Will you excuse me for a moment?

ROSAMUNDA. Right now?

HENRY. Yes, I'm afraid so. But Xavier's coming to; you can talk to him. *(Exits behind curtain.)*

XAVIER. Where am I?

ROSAMUNDA. You're in the Jekyll's drawing room!

XAVIER. Oh, yes. Where is he?

ROSAMUNDA. He went out for a moment. But I believe he was about to propose to me!

XAVIER. Listen to me. You must leave here at once!

ROSAMUNDA. Leave?

XAVIER. I tell you this for your own good! You mustn't marry Dr. Jekyll!

ROSAMUNDA. Mr. Utrerson, this is most strange. I've allowed you into my confidence and now you seem to want to hinder me!

XAVIER. *(Grasping her shoulders.)* Rosamunda, I implore you! *(Enter Ambrosia.)*

AMBROSIA. Well, well, what's going on here?

ROSAMUNDA. Mr. Utrerson was just ... demonstrating a medical procedure.

AMBROSIA. I see ... Xavier, why don't you run along to the hospital before someone sends you there on a stretcher.

XAVIER. But —

AMBROSIA. Good day, Xavier!

XAVIER. Well, good day, then. Miss Dewthistle.

ROSAMUNDA. Mr. Utrerson. *(Exit Xavier.)* I believe your brother is on the brink of a proposal!

AMBROSIA. Really? Where is he?
 ROSAMUNDA. I'm not sure. He said "Oh, Miss Dewthistle," and then he ran out.
 AMBROSIA. He said, "Oh, Miss Dewthistle?"
 ROSAMUNDA. Yes!
 AMBROSIA. Did he say it like, "Oh, Miss Dewthistle," or like "Oh, Miss Dewthistle?"
 ROSAMUNDA. I think it was more like the first.
 AMBROSIA. Were his eyes downcast or looking straight at you?
 ROSAMUNDA. They were darting from my face to Mr. Urterson's, who was unconscious at the time.
 AMBROSIA. I see. Miss Dewthistle, you must go at once and wait in the garden.
 ROSAMUNDA. But it's snowing!
 AMBROSIA. You can wear my wrap. Trust me, I'll send Henry out to you in a matter of moments! *(Exit Ambrosia and Rosamunda. Enter Ivy and Plodgett, looking for Ivy's feather duster.)*
 PLODGETT. Here it is, right behind the curtain. Now mind you don't dust yourself into a swoon again. Are you sure you had enough to eat?
 IVY. Yes, Miss Plodgett. But I'm having a very strange idea.
 PLODGETT. Perhaps you hit your head when you fell to the floor.
 IVY. Mmhm. Or perhaps the ideas what made me fall down!
 PLODGETT. Whatever do you mean?
 IVY. The murderer killed a pigeon in the park this morning, didn't he?
 PLODGETT. That's right.
 IVY. And he stabbed a policeman with his cane?
 PLODGETT. Well, that's what the chimney sweep said, but he also said "chim chiminy chim chim chirroo," so you decide how bright the lad is.
 IVY. But all the same, if you found a whole lot of pigeon feathers on someone's jacket, and a bloody cane in the closet, and a blood-covered handkerchief in someone's pocket, and that someone was out all last night and all morning, would you think that someone could be the murderer?
 PLODGETT. I suppose it's possible. Which someone were you thinkin' of?
 IVY. Dr. Jekyll!
 PLODGETT. But we saw the murderer in the park! It wasn't Dr.

Jekyll!
 IVY. Unless he was wearing a disguise!
 PLODGETT. Do you know what you're sayin', lass?
 IVY. Yes. I'm saying Dr. Jekyll's going to chop us up and turn us into pot pies!
 PLODGETT. Oh, Ivy, that's the funniest thing I've heard in years! Imagine Dr. Jekyll bein' a bloodthirsty murderer! Creepin' around in the park drownin' babies! Stabbin' policemen! *(Pause.)* Though I did notice the murderer wore the same shoes as Dr. Jekyll.
 HENRY. *(Offstage.)* Xavier!
 IVY. It's him! Quick, behind the curtain!
 PLODGETT. But Dr. Jekyll can't be the one!
 IVY. Hurry up — he's coming!
 PLODGETT. I tell you, it isn't possible! *(Ivy pulls Plodgett behind curtain. Enter Henry and Xavier, from opposite wings.)*
 HENRY. Xavier!
 XAVIER. You stay away from me!
 HENRY. No, it's me — Jekyll!
 XAVIER. I don't care whether you're Jekyll or Hyde or Little Bo Peep! As far as I'm concerned you're *all* evil!
 HENRY. Please listen to me. I can't control my evil half any longer. The antidote no longer works and I'm helpless to fend off these horrid transformations!
 XAVIER. Well, perhaps there's a lesson to be learned here about tampering with nature. *(Henry grabs him by throat.)* Or perhaps not.
 HENRY. I want you to get me another drop of blood.
 XAVIER. Another one? Oh no, I'm not going near her again!
 HENRY. From the other twin, the good one! It's my only hope! Oh, say you'll do it! Say you will!
 XAVIER. Well, I'll think it over. *(Henry grabs him by throat.)* All right, fine.
 HENRY. Lady Throckmortonshire and the child are coming this afternoon. You must wait for them here in the drawing room! *(He transforms into Hyde during the following.)*
 XAVIER. I'm afraid that may be a bit difficult. You see, Ambrosia thinks I'm in love with Miss Dewthistle. I suppose I can see why since I was begging her not to marry you, but you must understand, old chum, you really aren't treating Miss Dewthistle terribly well. Of course, I'm behind you one hundred percent and all that, but perhaps the poor girl does deserve to know you're an axe-wielding —

(*Notices change.*) You've changed again haven't you? (*Hyde growls.*) Well then, why don't we just discuss this later? (*Hyde knocks him out. Ivy and Plodgett watch in horror. He carries Xavier to sofa and throws him down, then changes back to Jekyll. Enter Ambrosia.*)

AMBROSIA. Henry! You must go out to the garden at once!

HENRY. I'm afraid I'm rather busy. Xavier! Wake up, Xavier!

XAVIER. (*Coming to.*) What happened?

HENRY. You fell and hit your head. Ambrosia, run and get some ice from the cook.

AMBROSIA. Cousin Xavier, as I recall I asked you to go home half an hour ago.

HENRY. Xavier is not going home.

AMBROSIA. Oh, yes he is. He has an appointment.

XAVIER. Well, I'd better shove off, then.

HENRY. Oh, no you don't. You're still helping me with that little experiment.

AMBROSIA. I assure you, he is not helping you. I am helping you, which is why you must listen to me when I tell you to go out to the garden right now and — (*Henry knocks her out with club.*)

XAVIER. ~~Good God, man!~~ What have you done?!

HENRY. I've knocked her out. Quick, help me drag her upstairs.

XAVIER. But she's your sister! And you're not even *him* right now!

HENRY. Well, perhaps the evil side's rubbed off a bit on the good. I'm sure we could discuss the matter at length, but frankly I'd like to get her upstairs and find that antidote before I chop up half of London with a butcher's knife! (*Five knocks at door.*) Shall we? (*Exit Henry and Xavier, dragging Ambrosia. Ivy and Plodgett come out from behind curtain.*)

IVY. What do we do now?!

PLODGETT. You stay here, I'll run for the constable.

IVY. But I don't want to stay here!

PLODGETT. We can't let Dr. Jekyll know we're on to him or he'll run away!

LADY T. (*Offstage.*) Hello? Mrs. Jekyll, are you at home?

PLODGETT. Just act natural! I'll be back quick as a wink! (*Exit Plodgett.*)

EUPHRONIA. (*Offstage.*) Good afternoon, Lady Throckmorton-shire!

LADY T. I trust we haven't come at an inconvenient time? (*Enter Euphronia and Lady T.*)

EUPHRONIA. Not at all. I was just having my portrait painted in the costume of Salomé. I have the most marvellous portrait painter. Goodbye, Mr. Wentworth-Eau-de-Cologne! Thank you ever so much!

MAN'S VOICE. (*Offstage.*) Au revoir, Madam! (*Screams and cries in pain as Hyde murders him.*)

LADY T. I find the French language so turbulent, don't you?

EUPHRONIA. I believe Henry's occupied at the moment but I'm sure he'll be along shortly. Won't you sit down? And allow me to take your hat. I simply don't know where that maid could be.

LADY T. I believe she's cowering in the corner.

EUPHRONIA. Good heavens! Ivy, what are you doing?

IVY. Nothing, Madam. Just cowering.

EUPHRONIA. Go and fetch us our tea. And bring the little fig cakes with the powdered Brazilian sugar.

IVY. You mean from the kitchen?

EUPHRONIA. Of course from the kitchen!

IVY. Wouldn't you rather I run to the market for some crumpets and cream?

EUPHRONIA. Why would we want crumpets and cream when we have Brazilian fig cakes? I do hope you'll like them, Lady Throckmortonshire. They arrived only yesterday at Madame de Meep's.

IVY. I was just thinking they might have gone funny. I wouldn't want you to get sick again.

EUPHRONIA. Ivy, really! Stop this silly arguing and fetch them at once!

IVY. Yes, Madam. (*She turns to go. Enter Calliope trailing popped balloons. Ivy screams.*)

CALLIOPE. I'm the good one.

IVY. Oh.

EUPHRONIA. The tea, Ivy?

IVY. Yes, Madam. (*Exit Ivy.*)

EUPHRONIA. My word, Calliope, whatever happened to your balloons?

CALLIOPE. They were popped by a murderer in the park.

EUPHRONIA. No! You don't mean to say you've actually seen him!

LADY T. He was within a hair's breadth of slitting our throats. Fortunately a bobby arrived in time to have his throat slit in our place.

EUPHRONIA. Why, you poor dears! You must have been terrified! Imagine seeing such a thing!

LADY T. You can't imagine how ruined we are by the encounter. Poor Calliope's hand is still clamped to her balloon strings in fear. Fortunately, I diverted her eyes from the slaughter of the pigeon, or she might have developed a lifelong aversion to feather beds.

CALLIOPE. I do think it's wrong to hurt pigeons in the park, don't you, Mrs. Jekyll?

EUPHRONIA. Well, of course it's wrong.

CALLIOPE. Do you think the murdered pigeon had any baby pigeons?

EUPHRONIA. I'm not sure. I suppose most pigeons do breed quite uncontrollably.

CALLIOPE. I see. Might I trouble you for a handkerchief? I don't want to get tears on the carpet. *(Weeps.)*

EUPHRONIA. *(Weeping.)* Good heavens, it's simply enough to break one's heart.

LADY T. *(Weeping.)* Quite so. If I possessed a heart it would be riven in twain. *(Enter Henry and Xavier. Xavier has syringes, Henry has poison in bottle.)*

EUPHRONIA. Oh, Henry! Thank goodness you've come. Lady Throckmortonshire is here for the test results.

HENRY. Test results?

LADY T. For the infection. Penelope is at home in protective quarantine!

HENRY. Oh, the infection. As a matter of fact it wasn't serious at all, was it, Xavier?

XAVIER. Well, not having examined her I can't — *(Henry hits him.)* It was a head cold.

EUPHRONIA. What a relief.

LADY T. Thank heaven!

EUPHRONIA. Whatever are you carrying around in that bottle? It looks like some sort of evil potion.

HENRY. Evil! Not at all, it's just a bit of grape juice. Evil potion. Hal! Did you hear that, Xavier? *(The two of them laugh. Enter Ivy with tea tray. She sees Henry, screams.)*

EUPHRONIA. Good heavens, Ivy, what's the matter?

IVY. Nothing, Madam!

LADY T. The poor girl's white as a sheet. Perhaps she's ill.

EUPHRONIA. Ivy, are you ill?

IVY. Not ill! Scared!

EUPHRONIA. Dr. Jekyll will help you down to the kitchen and have a look at you.

IVY. No! Not Dr. Jekyll! Pot pie!

HENRY. You see, Mother, she's just hungry. Now run along and eat a biscuit like I told you to.

EUPHRONIA. Perhaps she'd like a bit of grape juice.

HENRY and XAVIER. No!

EUPHRONIA. Why ever not?

HENRY. Because ... because if the girl wants pot pie then by God, she shall have pot pie. Xavier, take the grape juice. Come along then, Ivy! *(Exit Henry, pulling Ivy.)*

CALLIOPE. I'm going to go wash my hands before tea. *(Exit Calliope.)*

XAVIER. Capital idea. I believe I'll wash up too. *(Exit Xavier in pursuit, leaving potion.)*

EUPHRONIA. Everyone is certainly behaving strangely today. You mustn't imagine our household is always in such turmoil, Lady Throckmortonshire. I simply don't know what's gotten into the servants. Fig cake?

LADY T. I understand completely. I myself have come to believe the only answer to the servant problem is public beheading.

EUPHRONIA. Beheading?

LADY T. If we simply lopped off their heads in Picadilly Circus I believe you'd see a great deal less unruliness on the part of the underclass. Don't you agree?

EUPHRONIA. I'm not sure, I suppose I do agree in principle but — Oh dear, Ivy's only filled the teapot halfway. You must have this cup, of course.

LADY T. Not at all. A glass of grape juice will suit me admirably.

EUPHRONIA. Are you certain? I'd be only too glad to drink the grape juice myself. That way you can have the tea.

LADY T. One always has tea. Tea, tea, and more tea. The grape juice will be a pleasant novelty.

EUPHRONIA. Well, if you'd really like to have it.

LADY T. Oh, I insist upon it.

EUPHRONIA. Very well, then. Oh, whatever must you think of me, Lady Throckmortonshire? I suppose you're aware that my dear husband is now ... *(Gazes heavenward.)*

LADY T. Yes, yes. It must be terribly difficult for you.

EUPHRONIA. If only he were dead it would be one thing, but traveling the world in a hot air balloon accompanied by two female sheep and a parakeet ... I'm afraid it's nearly destroyed the family.

LADY T. Yes, it would, wouldn't it. Your son seems particularly afflicted. *(Drinks potion.)*

EUPHRONIA. Oh, Henry. Yes, he has taken it rather hard. But with any luck he will soon settle down and marry Miss Dewthistle. A charming girl, don't you agree? *(Looks at Lady T, who begins to spasm.)* Well, I suppose you did only meet her the once. *(Lady T spasms and shrieks.)* Excuse me? *(Lady T begins moving towards her growling.)* Lady Throckmortonshire, I assure you there's no need for hysterics. If the grape juice doesn't suit you we'll simply — *(Lady T takes Euphronia in her arms and tries to kiss her.)* Please, Lady Throckmortonshire, control yourself! Oh, help! Help! *(Enter Xavier.)*

XAVIER. What's the matter? I heard shouting!

EUPHRONIA. It's Lady Throckmortonshire! She's had some sort of attack!

LADY T. Murth kith ladieth. Beautiful ladieth!

XAVIER. Oh, no! She didn't drink the potion, did she?

EUPHRONIA. You mean the grape juice? Why, yes!

XAVIER. Lady Throckmortonshire, don't be alarmed! It will wear off in a few moments! If you'll just sit down and try not to kill anyone — *(She raises club.)* Well then, would you mind hitting the left side, this one's already got quite a lump. *(She knocks him out, he falls on sofa. Enter Henry.)*

HENRY. What happened? *(Lady T grabs for Euphronia, all three are locked in struggle.)*

EUPHRONIA. Lady Throckmortonshire drank the grape juice and went mad, and then she attacked Cousin Xavier, and now she's trying to make love to me!

LADY T. *(Lipping.)* Lethboth! Lethboth!

HENRY. Yes, I can see that. Mother, if it's all right with you, I'd like you to give her a little tap on the head with that club and knock her out!

EUPHRONIA. Oh, Henry, do you really think I should?

HENRY. Yes, after careful deliberation, I do.

EUPHRONIA. But she's a member of high society! She's a lady! She's a — good grief, she's unhooked my corset! *(Euphronia grabs club and knocks out Lady T. Enter Constable, Plodgett, Ivy.)*

PLODGETT. There he is!

IVY. Arrest him, quick! Lock him up!

CONSTABLE. Quiet down, Miss, I'll take over from here. Now what seems to be the trouble, sir?

EUPHRONIA. There's no trouble, Constable, we were just having our afternoon tea.

CONSTABLE. I see. Well, I'll be off, then.

PLODGETT. Agh, the bodies?

CONSTABLE. Right! And what about the two bodies on the sofa? I suppose they just appeared out of the reapor?

PLODGETT. Of course not. We already told you who did it!

CONSTABLE. Hold your tongue, lassie. My mind's pickin' up facts like a squirrel rounds up acorns.

HENRY. Constable, there's a very simple explanation for all of this. Lady Throckmortonshire clubbed him —

EUPHRONIA. And then I clubbed Lady Throckmortonshire —

HENRY. Who was having a sort of fit —

EUPHRONIA. Which was only because the maid was ill and the reapor was half full with tea. But none of them are dead, they're merely sleeping. So I assure you there's no cause for scandal.

CONSTABLE. I see. Well, as long as that's settled, I'd best get back to the station.

PLODGETT. What?!

CONSTABLE. There is just one more question before I go. Is that a fig cake?

EUPHRONIA. Why, yes it is. How clever of you to notice.

CONSTABLE. Oh, they train us to see every little detail. My eyes are sharp as a falcon's.

EUPHRONIA. Won't you take one with you? We have ever so many.

HENRY. Mother, I'm sure the constable has more important things to do!

IVY. Like get the murderer!

CONSTABLE. Why no, in fact the murderer's been a bit slow since this mornin'. A bit of fig cake sounds right pleasant.

PLODGETT. What have you got, haggis for brains? We told you he's the murderer!

IVY. We saw it with our own two eyes!

CONSTABLE. Oh no, that's not possible. You see we're lookin' for a cold-blooded, brutal type, not someone like Dr. Jekyll. Do you mind if I scoot this body over a bit?

EUPHRONIA. Go right ahead.

PLODGETT. Well, I never saw such a mockery of justice in all my years. You're a disgrace to your country is what you are. An Irish lapdog on the English knee, betrayin' the god-given truth for a bit of fig cake and a pat on the head! In the name of all Scotland and Ireland I hope you choke on your scrap of cake and they throw you belly-up in the Thames with the rest of the garbage!

CONSTABLE. (*Chews, swallows.*) Been throwin' garbage in the Thames then, have you? You can get a citation for that.

PLODGETT. Agh! Come on, Ivy, we're packin' up our things!

(*Exit Ivy and Plodgett. Lady T sits up.*)

EUPHRONIA. Lady Throckmortonshire! Are you feeling better?

LADY T. Lethboth! Lethboth! (*Lunges at Euphronia.*)

CONSTABLE. What's all this, then?

HENRY. (*Struggling to pull her off.*) Oh, just female troubles. Ovaries all in a knot ... Come along, Lady Throckmortonshire. Mother, won't you see the constable out?

EUPHRONIA. By all means. Thank you so much for stopping by.

CONSTABLE. All in a day's work. (*Henry struggles with Lady T behind them.*) Now then, where did I leave that billy club?

EUPHRONIA. Here it is, right on the sofa!

CONSTABLE. This was a gift from the poor Lieutenant. A tragic occurrence. Died right before my eyes, he did.

EUPHRONIA. You don't say? (*Henry shoos Lady T out the window. She screams.*)

CONSTABLE. Sometimes I can still hear the sound of his whistle callin' me to attention. Hard to believe he's really gone. (*Dabs an eye.*) Well, I'd best be off. I'd keep indoors if I were you, Madam. The streets aren't safe for a lady these days. (*Lady T pulls Henry out window. They struggle in the snow.*)

EUPHRONIA. Oh, yes. Yes, quite. Do watch your step on the ice.

Constable. (*Exit Euphronia and Constable. In window, Henry punches Lady T and knocks her out, then spasms and transforms into Hyde. Enter Calliope.*)

CALLIOPE. Mother? Mrs. Jekyll? (*She prods Xavier.*) Pardon me. Have you seen my mother? (*Xavier groans.*) Oh my, you've got a nasty bump on your head. (*She touches it, he flinches.*) I'm sorry, I didn't mean to hurt you. (*Hyde enters through window, behind.*)

XAVIER. Where am I?

CALLIOPE. You're in the Jekylls' drawing room.

XAVIER. Where is *he*? Where is *he*?

CALLIOPE. Where is who?

XAVIER. Hyde. (*Sees Hyde, she does not.*) Hyde! Hyde!

CALLIOPE. I'm afraid I don't feel much like hiding, but I'll be glad to count if you like. (*She covers her eyes.*) One. Two. Three ... (*Xavier fights with Hyde.*) You really should be more quiet or I'll know just where you've gone. Four. Five. Six ... (*Henry knocks Xavier out, then turns on Calliope.*) Seven. Eight. Nine. Ready or not here I — (*Calliope opens her eyes. Hyde stands before her.*)

HYDE. Hello, little girl.

CALLIOPE. You're the murderer, aren't you?

HYDE. Yeth, I am.

CALLIOPE. I shouldn't like to be a murderer. You must feel very bad inside.

HYDE. Oh, yeth. I feel juthr terrible. But there ih thomething that would make me feel better.

CALLIOPE. Are you going to pray for forgiveness? That always makes me feel better.

HYDE. I'll do that later, but firthr I'm going to pluck out the heart of a little girl, and feed it to the pigeon. (*Calliope considers this, then turns and flees. Hyde catches her, starts to strangle her, then transforms back into Jekyll.*)

HENRY. Are you all right, Penelope?

CALLIOPE. I'm Calliope! Please don't hurt me!

HENRY. I'm not going to hurt you. Though I'm afraid I have to extract a pint of blood from your finger.

CALLIOPE. No!

HENRY. (*Struggling with her, takes out a syringe.*) I assure you it won't hurt for long. Stop squirming! This is for the good of humanity!

(*He jabs at her finger, she screams. Rosamunda appears at window.*)

ROSAMUNDA. Dr. Jekyll!

HENRY. Miss Dewthistle!

CALLIOPE. Help!

ROSAMUNDA. What on earth is going on?

CALLIOPE. He's trying to — (*Henry covers her mouth.*)

HENRY. I'm extracting a splinter.

ROSAMUNDA. Perhaps I could be of assistance. I was a volunteer nurse for the war wounded. (*Rosamunda enters through window.*)

HENRY. Were you? Well, I've removed the splinter but I've still got to draw some blood. Checking for tetanus, you know.

ROSAMUNDA. Oh yes, I know all about tetanus.

HENRY. Do you?

ROSAMUNDA. Yes, I do. *(She draws the blood while Henry restrains Calliope.)* Dr. Jekyll?

HENRY. Yes, Miss Dewthistle?

ROSAMUNDA. I must confess, I've been waiting for you in the garden.

HENRY. You have?

ROSAMUNDA. Yes. I've been waiting for a moment alone with you, like this one. *(Hands him the syringe of blood.)*

HENRY. Thank you, Miss Dewthistle. Though I'm afraid we aren't alone.

ROSAMUNDA. Yes, we are.

HENRY. What about Penelope?

ROSAMUNDA. You mean Calliope.

HENRY. Yes, Calliope.

ROSAMUNDA. She seems to have fainted.

HENRY. I see.

ROSAMUNDA. Dr. Jekyll —

HENRY. Miss Dewthistle — *(Rosamunda throws herself at him. He drops Calliope. Rosamunda locks him in an embrace.)* Miss Dewthistle, really!

ROSAMUNDA. Oh, Dr. Jekyll! I'm a ripe peach dangling from a tree!

HENRY. Good God!

ROSAMUNDA. I've read your furtive looks. I know it's only propriety which makes you hold back!

HENRY. Please, Miss Dewthistle! *(She kisses him, the syringe squirts an arc of blood.)* I beg you! *(Another kiss, more blood.)* I'm in the midst of a very important — *(He begins to spasm.)*

ROSAMUNDA. Yes. It's very important. Very, very important. *(She kisses him. He pulls away.)*

HENRY. Run, Miss Dewthistle. You must run. *(Spasms.)*

ROSAMUNDA. But I don't wish to run. I wish to be caught!

HENRY. No! Get away! As fast as you can! *(Spasms and transforms into Hyde. He growls, begins to pursue her.)*

ROSAMUNDA. *(Laughing.)* Why, Dr. Jekyll! How changeable you are! *(She backs away from him.)* Your sister did warn me that you loved a chase ...

HYDE. A chathe, yeth.

ROSAMUNDA. Well, I'm afraid your quarry in this case shan't run very far. *(She allows herself to be caught and embraced. Hyde looks into her eyes. She sees something there which terrifies her.)* Dr. Jekyll? No. Please — *(She screams. He throttles her. Enter Constable and Euphronia.)*

EUPHRONIA. Henry, come quickly! It's Lady Throckmortonshire! She's —

ROSAMUNDA. Help me ... Please help me ...

CONSTABLE. Blimey! He's the murderer!

EUPHRONIA. I don't understand. Henry?

HYDE. *(Vicious.)* Mother. Juthr in time. Come here and let me give you a kith ... *(Rosamunda dies. Hyde drops her to the ground, approaches Euphronia.)*

EUPHRONIA. Henry! What's going on?

CONSTABLE. Stay back, you scoundrel! *(Hyde wrestles Constable for the club, knocks Constable out. He makes for Euphronia. Euphronia screams. Enter Penelope with fire poker. She backs him towards the wing.)*

PENELOPE. Don't worry, thith won't hurt a bit.

HYDE. Which one are you?

PENELOPE. I'm the bad one.

HYDE. Ah. *(He turns to run into the wings, runs into the bottom of a frying pan. Enter Plodgett, with pan, followed by Ivy, Henry spasms, transforms from Hyde to Jekyll to Hyde to Jekyll, and collapses.)*

PLODGETT. You see, Ivy? It's the same way we liberated Scotland. Sometimes you have to take matters into your own two hands.

EUPHRONIA. Henry! *(She rushes to him.)* My poor dear! *(Enter Ambrosia, rubbing her head.)*

AMBROSIA. Mother, what's happened?

EUPHRONIA. It was Henry! He's ... the murderer!

AMBROSIA. Murderer? Does Miss Dewthistle know?

EUPHRONIA. *(Crying.)* Miss Dewthistle's dead. Oh, the shame! The shame of it! Whatever shall we do?

AMBROSIA. Come away. Come and sit down.

EUPHRONIA. But look at these bodies ... All over the room ... Bodies ... and more bodies ...

AMBROSIA. There, there, Mother. Come away. The maid will clean it all up. *(Ivy crosses downstage, addresses audience.)*

IVY. And so it was that the murderer Dr. Jekyll was caught and put in a cage, so that children could throw stones at him, and

adults could point and whisper of his deeds. And the world was safe again for the rich, and dangerous for the poor, and many a cup of tea was drunk and many a crumpet eaten. And many a person slept sound in their beds, now that evil was purged from the world. Though a few, who peered into their own hearts, found it harder to slumber.

End of Play

PROPERTY LIST

Feather duster
Potion
Chocolates
Rack of bottles
Prayer book
Eggnog
Stuffed horse
Bell
Napkins
Knife
Syringe
Basket
Cane
Balloons
Whistle
Crumbs
Feathers
Tea cups
Rope
Dynamite, book of matches
Butter knife
Bloody handkerchief
Playing cards
Club
Potion in bottle
Tea tray
Syringe of blood
Fire poker