



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

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850- 1894)

Read by:	David Barnes	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
Length:	3 hours 8 minutes	Catalog:	DB-1074
Language:	English	UPC:	852679827446
Style:	Solo	MSLP:	\$11.99
Genre:	Horror & Supernatural Fiction		

It's rare that a book's title becomes a staple of popular usage in the way that the phrase "Jekyll and Hyde" has come to signify a person who displays opposite moral character depending on the situation. How often one hears: "Oh, he was a regular 'Jekyll and Hyde,'" and one knows that the person so described must have exhibited contrary behavior, kind and upright, then cruel and depraved, the transition occurring without explanation or warning. All of this originates with the disturbing novella, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, written by Robert Louis Stevenson in 1886. Stevenson was a sick man, his lungs wracked with tuberculosis. He was not unacquainted with medicines and drugs ministered to ease his condition. He was also fascinated with the interplay of good and evil as both exist in the same heart and soul

of each person. *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* explores the manifestation of good and evil in the person of one, Dr. Jekyll, a good and upright member of the community, who, on the ingestion of a certain potion, is transformed into the odious sociopath, Mr. Hyde. Allusions to the detrimental effect of toxic substances, drugs or alcohol, on one's behavior cannot be ignored. However, Stevenson's work explores a deeper mystery as to how a human being can accommodate intention and conduct based in opposing moral camps. In this the novella is a cautionary tale to the notion then popular in England at the height of its industrialized empire – the imminent perfectibility of man. (Summary by Michael Hogan)

**Robert Louis Stevenson** (November 13, 1850 – December 3, 1894) was a Scottish author best known for *Treasure Island*, *Kidnapped*, and the *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Born an only child in Edinburgh into a family of lighthouse engineers on his father's side and landed gentry on his mother's, he was a sickly child who attended school intermittently, and was taught by private tutors. He started telling stories before he could read, and during childhood was a compulsive story writer, publishing his first piece age 16. During vacations he traveled with his father to inspect the family's lighthouse engineering projects, which gave him much seafaring material for his later stories. He studied engineering and then law at University of Edinburgh before embarking on his literary career, which began in 1873 with the publication of an essay. He visited France frequently for his health and there he met an American woman, Fanny de Grift Osbourne, married with three children but separated from her husband. He travelled to and then across America to visit her in San Francisco; they were married in 1880 after her divorce. Always battling infirmity, Stevenson lived in various English locations, in France, and in the U.S. in his thirties, seeking a compatible climate. During these years he produced his best known work. After his father's death in 1887 he journeyed to America and then set sail with his family in 1888 to wander the South Pacific for three years, ultimately settling on a tract of four hundred acres in the Samoan island of Upolu, where he died suddenly of a cerebral hemorrhage in 1894. He had become involved in local affairs and was much loved by the Samoans, who translated his epitaph into a Samoan song of grief that is sung to this day. He continues to rank among the most translated authors in the world, and was admired by many of his peers and literary successors.