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FRANKENSTEIN

Freely adapted from the novel by Mary Shelley

By

Marjorie Bicknell

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Frankenstein

by Marjorie Bicknell

THE SETTING:

Time: *Several months in the years 1815 and 1816*

Place: *Victor Frankenstein's home in Switzerland, and at the North Pole*

CHARACTERS:

Victor Frankenstein: *A Scientist*

Robert Walton: *An Explorer*

Henry Clerval: *Frankenstein's Assistant*

Justine Moritz: *Madame Frankenstein's Companion*

Madame Frankenstein: *Frankenstein's Mother*

Elizabeth Lavenza: *Frankenstein's Fiancée*

The Creature

Frankenstein
By Marjorie Bicknell

ACT I, Scene I

AT RISE: Walton's ship at the North Pole. WALTON is at work upon the ship's log. VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN is stretched out apparently unconscious, on a cot beside Walton's desk. Next to him on the cot is a small book; his diary.

WALTON

(Reading what he has just written) June 12, 1816. Today, my goal stands a mere ten miles away. Within my grasp is the discovery of true north. The one place where man stands at the top of the world with all humanity at his feet. Ten miles away stands my best chance for immortality. I, Robert Walton, will be the first man to reach this northern-most spot alive, claim discovery and return. I will have my place in history. It is out there waiting for me, and me alone. I know it. Others have tried only to fail. The cold and ice have destroyed them all. Even my crew, brave men all, is succumbing to these conditions. Claiming to have seen a devil on the ice, and to hear him call out to them, they would have me turn back. But there is no devil. Only a man, the sole survivor of his ship. A man who failed to defeat me and who will now become my assurance of victory. A man whose only possession is the book I have before me. A diary filled with scribbling that boast of the creation of a new life – a fantasy more absurd than a flight to the moon. *(Picking up Frankenstein's diary)* “The creation of life had always been my dream, and as I grew older, it became my obsession.”

VICTOR

And I became convinced that I could find the secret of life.

WALTON

A remarkable recovery. I congratulate you on your survival. You have lost your ship, you know.

FRANKENSTEIN

My ship? What ship?

WALTON

The ship in which you tried to keep me from reaching the North Pole.

VICTOR

I have no ship.

WALTON

(Looking at the name in the diary) Well, Mr. Victor Frankenstein, unless you are a god, you have traveled here by ship.

VICTOR

I can assure you, sir, that I am not God. I have no ship, no crew, and no desire to stop you. I have traveled here by foot.

WALTON

By foot? Over this ice? Through a cold that breaks a man's bones like the snap of a finger?

VICTOR

I am here.

WALTON

And you came here to be the first to the top of the world.

VICTOR

No, Captain Walton. I came here to settle a debt.

WALTON

You have a demanding creditor.

VICTOR

I do. He demands my death.

WALTON

I suppose this creditor is the devil my men saw on the ice.

VICTOR

The devil. Yes. That is the truth. They did see the devil.

WALTON

The truth, sir, is that you have come here for discovery and for fame.

VICTOR

No, I desire nothing but the freedom to settle by business.

WALTON

You, sir, have no business. Your ship has been destroyed, and with it all hope of your return – unless you cooperate.

VICTOR

Cooperate?

WALTON

Tell my men that it was you on the ice calling, "Give me your hand. Give me your hand..."

VICTOR

"...Brother, comrade, friend."

WALTON

So it was you.

FRANKENSTEIN

It was the devil.

WALTON

Who is he? (*Pause*) Answer me!

VICTOR

Your men are correct. There is a devil on the ice. A fiend who will destroy every living thing to reach me – a hideous freak, an accident of creation. He is evil, I tell you, an evil for which I am responsible. I created him. I nurtured him, and I unleashed him upon mankind.

WALTON

You are mad.

VICTOR

The secret of life is in that book, and how I paid for its discovery.

WALTON

I have heard of plots to send sailors mad and away from their course, but never one so fantastic as this. Now give me the truth.

VICTOR

I swear to you, this is the truth and no fantasy. There is no plot to steal your discovery of the North Pole. There is a Creature on the ice waiting to kill anyone who stands between us. I will not rest until he is dead.

WALTON

You are either a genius or a madman, Victor Frankenstein.

VICTOR

I have been called both. If you don't believe me, look in the diary. I swear to you, it's all there: the Creation, the Fall and the Exile. It's a story so incredible it will be laughed away until he returns to kill. And he will return. He is the Creature who stands at the top of the world and laughs at mankind.

WALTON

Where is your proof?

VICTOR

Wait with me, sir. Wait for his return. You will have your proof. You will find your discovery dwarfed by the horror of his presence.

WALTON

You are foolish to think you can stop me now. The discovery of true north will be mine.

VICTOR

Take it. Take your discovery. Take the world. Take it all. Unless my Creature takes it first.

WALTON

And how will your Creature take the world?

VICTOR

By murder, insanity and mockery – mockery of the life force itself. All is changed – changed utterly. Read. Read it for yourself.

WALTON

(Returning to the diary) The creation of life had always been my dream, and as I grew older, it became my obsession. I had no idea of the terror I would unleash. I only sought to do good. I had read the old philosophers and studied the books of alchemy that filled my father's shelves...

VICTOR

... and I became convinced that within them I could find the secret of life.

The ship falls into darkness. A SPOTLIGHT illuminates VICTOR who rises and moves center stage to tell his story. During the next speech, the ship disappears to be replaced by the laboratory.

ACT I; SCENE II

VICTOR

At an early age, I had learned that nature was capricious and man's place in it precarious. One man would live while another died. One would prosper while another suffered. In short, all blessings were given – or withheld – without regard to man's basic goodness. I resolved that I would create a new man. A man perfect in body and spirit, logical in thought and noble in bearing. A man, who by his very perfection, could lead mankind to a higher plane. For years, I feared to share my thoughts with anyone and carried on my work alone. Finally, in university I met the one man who could help me. Henry Clerval was the son of a wealthy tradesman. Much of the university life was closed to him because of his father's lack of rank, and Henry swore that the social order must be changed so that only those who were deserving would reap life's benefits. To him, the creation of a new man for the betterment of mankind was neither insanity nor sacrilege, but a necessity. Henry's view of a better world was so like my own that I took him into my confidence. He became my assistant, and with his superior knowledge of history, literature and economics, would instruct our new Adam.

LIGHTS RISE on the LABORATORY of VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN. The CREATURE is seated on a stool supported by a makeshift sling. His head and hands are bandaged. Tubes run from his neck, arms and legs to a large funnel hung from a bar above a laboratory table. The table itself is covered with bottles and the paraphernalia of a working chemistry laboratory. HENRY CLERVAL is busy checking equipment and referring to notes in a book. VICTOR enters from the "no man's land" where he has been talking to the audience.

VICTOR

(Checking the Creature for himself) Henry, have you checked the connections?

HENRY

They are all sealed. Everything seems to be in working order.

VICTOR begins checking and re-checking the bandages, tubing and the bottles hanging above the Creature's head.

VICTOR

(To HENRY as HE reaches for a bottle) Don't touch that!

HENRY

Calm down, Victor.

VICTOR

This is it, Henry.

HENRY

I know. A new man. Born an adult. The first of a new race. A race that knows nothing of prejudice or hate – perfect. He'll be a joy to instruct.

VICTOR

Henry, hand me the bottle.

VICTOR takes the bottle from HENRY, and pours the liquid into each of the hanging bottles. Immediately, they begin to glow. VICTOR then opens the spigots on each of the bottles allowing the glowing liquid to flow down the tubes and into the CREATURE.

HENRY

Well?

VICTOR

There is a pulse, but it won't sustain unless he starts breathing. Help me lay him flat. Lower the ropes. Disconnect the tubes.

VICTOR and HENRY lay the CREATURE on the floor. VICTOR attempts resuscitation. Nothing happens. Victor stops and turns away from Henry in despair. The CREATURE takes a huge gasping breath, and begins to choke. HENRY and VICTOR spring into action.

VICTOR

Quick, Henry, something to depress his tongue.

HENRY grabs a tongue depressor and bucket. THEY clear the CREATURE's mouth. HE begins breathing more steadily. VICTOR monitors.

HENRY

Is it satisfactory?

VICTOR

Satisfactory and getting stronger by the moment. We've done it, Henry. We've really done it.

The CREATURE sits up and opens his eyes as HENRY and VICTOR stare in astonishment.

BLACKOUT.

ACT I; SCENE III

AT RISE: The library of the Frankenstein house the same evening. This room also doubles as Victor's study when he is not in the laboratory. It is a comfortable room, much used by all members of the Frankenstein household. JUSTINE MORITZ enters. SHE goes to the window and looks out, being careful not to let herself be seen by anyone looking in. SHE seems to be searching, but then some unknown action catches her attention and SHE forgets to hide and simply stares.

MADAME FRANKENSTEIN enters.

MADAME

The last of the guests just arrived, Justine. Have you seen my son – or Henry – yet?

JUSTINE

(Startled, turning) No Madame. The light is still on in the laboratory. I've been watching.

MADAME

What can be keeping them? Elizabeth is nervous enough without this.

JUSTINE

I am sure they will be here soon. Henry – Monsieur Clerval – said he would make sure Victor left his work in plenty of time to change for the party.

MADAME

Well, they are going to have to hurry if they don't want to keep half the district waiting. Can you see anything at all?

JUSTINE

(Looking out the window again) No Madame. Oh, wait. The light just went out.

MADAME

Then they are coming. Did you check the wine?

JUSTINE

It's all chilled.

MADAME

And there are enough glasses?

JUSTINE

More than enough.

MADAME

And Cook knows what time dinner is to be served.

JUSTINE

Yes, yes, Madame. There is nothing to worry about.

MADAME

I hope you're right.

JUSTINE

What do you mean? The party will be a success. It will be the best engagement party anyone in this district has ever attended.

MADAME

You're right. But it's not the party I'm worried about. It's Victor. It's his work.

JUSTINE

But, Madame, you were so pleased when he took the medical degree at the university. So pleased that he was going to do something useful with his life.

MADAME

I was pleased, Justine. But I never thought his work would become such an obsession. Justine, is the wine chilled?

JUSTINE

Yes, Madame.

MADAME

Oh, my! The guests. Here I am talking and there's no one with them. You keep a watch for Victor and Henry. Let me know the moment they arrive.

MADAME FRANKENSTEIN hurries out the door. JUSTINE returns to the window. The library door opens again, and HENRY CLERVAL enters. HE has just come in from the laboratory.

HENRY

Tell me, Mademoiselle, why are you hidden away in here when there is a party taking place? You should be out breaking half the hearts in the district.

JUSTINE

Monsieur Clerval! What are you doing here? You've got to change for the party. Madame wants to announce the engagement before dinner.

HENRY

I know she does, but I've got some important business to take care of first.

JUSTINE

But what can be more important than Victor and Elizabeth's engagement?

HENRY

I'll tell you that in a moment. But you haven't answered my question, yet. Why aren't you at the party? I can't imagine that they neglected to invite the prettiest girl in Switzerland.

JUSTINE

I am not at the party because I have work to do.

HENRY

Work? Tonight? I was counting on your company at dinner.

JUSTINE

Mine? With all the beautiful ladies present?

HENRY

Ah, but none so beautiful as you.

JUSTINE

Monsieur, stop. It's not right to pay me compliments.

HENRY

I'm not paying you a compliment. That was the truth.

JUSTINE

Have you forgotten? I am merely a servant in this house.

HENRY

A mere servant? No you are not. What mere servant has so many pretty dresses...or went to school with the mistress' niece ... or calls the head of the family by his Christian name...or dines with the family?

JUSTINE

When there is no other company. Monsieur...

HENRY

My name is Henry. When will you learn to use it?

JUSTINE

Monsieur Clerval, no matter how privileged my position may seem to you, I am still a servant. I am paid a salary. Servants are not invited to family parties, and...

HENRY

Guests of the family are not supposed to flirt with them. Is that what you were going to say?

JUSTINE

No...That is...

HENRY

I did not mean to embarrass you.

JUSTINE

But you have. We are not of the same station in life. It isn't fair of you to give me cause to hope for something I can never have.

HENRY

Justine! You do like me a little, then?

JUSTINE

Yes.

HENRY

More than a little?

JUSTINE

Yes.

HENRY

I thought you did.

JUSTINE

What does that matter? You are a guest, while I...

HENRY

Oh, Justine! I am no gentleman. Even my university degree and my friendship with Victor can't erase the fact that my father is merely a tradesman – as your father was. Besides, the old class system is dead here and dying everywhere else. There is no reason I can think of why you cannot marry me, Justine. *(Pause)* If you love me.

JUSTINE

Henry! Do you mean it?

HENRY

I swear I do. I am not letting you out of this room until you say, "Yes."

JUSTINE

But...

HENRY

You can't say no. I've already written to my parents about you. They are expecting a visit within the month.

JUSTINE

They want to meet me?

HENRY

My mother is so pleased. She told me to marry a girl who could run a household.

JUSTINE

But Henry, you haven't said anything about...

HENRY

Yes, Justine. I love you. You wouldn't get a chance to turn me into a married man for any other reason. Now what's your answer? I can't wait much longer.

JUSTINE

Yes.

HENRY

Let's tell everyone right now.

JUSTINE

No. Henry, we can't. They haven't even announced Victor and Elizabeth's engagement, yet.

HENRY

All right. I'll wait until tomorrow.

JUSTINE

Henry, we can't tell them tomorrow. We must wait until after the wedding.

HENRY

You're afraid I'll change my mind.

JUSTINE

No Henry. It's just that Elizabeth has waited so long, and she deserves her day.

HENRY

We'll wait. But you better tell me you love me just a little or I may think I'm engaged to a social climber.

JUSTINE

Henry, I do love you.

HENRY

You do? And this is the first time you've said anything about it?

JUSTINE

I thought it was hopeless.

HENRY

Then you must have been blind.

JUSTINE

Henry! Oh, my, the party! Everyone is waiting and you still have to change. You've got to go.

MADAME

(Entering) So that's where you are. Justine's right. We can't wait much longer to make the announcement. The way the wine is flowing half the company will be too drunk to notice before long. Did Victor return with you?

HENRY

Yes, Madame. He went upstairs to change.

MADAME

Obviously, you found something more important to occupy you.

HENRY and JUSTINE blush but say nothing.

MADAME

I only hope I have less trouble getting you two to the altar.

HENRY

What?

JUSTINE

Madame!

MADAME

(Pleased with her surprise) Did you really think I wouldn't notice? Now, Henry. Get upstairs and tell that son of mine I want to see him here – before he goes into the party. And Justine – run and tell Cook to hold dinner for a few minutes longer.

JUSTINE and HENRY exit. MADAME moves restlessly around the room. The door opens and ELIZABETH LAVENZA enters.

ELIZABETH

Where is Victor?

MADAME

Elizabeth. What are you doing here? You should be with your guests.

ELIZABETH

They are all wondering what is keeping him.

MADAME

He'll be down, shortly.

ELIZABETH

Where has he been?

MADAME

He was out in the laboratory.

ELIZABETH

He promised me...

MADAME

Don't worry. I will speak to him. You go back into the party.

ELIZABETH

Perhaps this engagement was a mistake.

MADAME

Don't say that. You love Victor. Victor loves you and it's settled. I've known this would happen ever since I brought you to live in this house as a little girl. You and Victor have always been so close. Now, it's time you were both married. Victor must take his place in society. Off with you. Victor and I will join you in a few moments.

VICTOR

(At the door) Mother, Henry said you wanted to see me.

MADAME

YES.

*VICTOR and ELIZABETH stare at each other
for a moment.*

VICTOR

Elizabeth...

ELIZABETH

Excuse me, Victor, the guests are waiting. *(SHE turns and exits.)*

MADAME

Tell me why you were late. Tonight of all nights.

VICTOR

I was working. My research has reached a critical point.

MADAME

Will you be late for you wedding as well? Your work always seems to be at a critical point.

VICTOR

It is research, Mother. It's difficult to explain.

MADAME

No research could be so important that you no longer have time for your family. This behavior of yours has got to stop. You're grieving Elizabeth, and ruining your health. You seldom hear us when we talk to you. You only eat when you are forced, and then barely enough to keep body and soul together. And now, tonight, you practically miss the announcement of your own engagement. Half the district is waiting for you, Victor. Do I tell them research kept you?

VICTOR

No, Mother.

MADAME

You have responsibilities to Elizabeth now, and they come before this work of yours. It's not as if you have to earn a living. This research is just a game.

VICTOR

My research is very important, Mother. It is not a game.

MADAME

It is not as important as keeping your word.

VICTOR

Would you feel better if I told you I've completed the most important phase of my work? I still need to spend time in the laboratory, but that time will become shorter and shorter. From now on things will be better.

MADAME

You are not saying this just to appease me, are you?

VICTOR

No. I mean every word of it.

MADAME

Well, you'd better speak to Elizabeth and see if she'll understand.

VICTOR exits followed by MADAME who stops first to look out the window towards the laboratory.

JUSTINE enters hotly pursued by HENRY. THEY are laughing.

HENRY

Now, do I get that kiss, or do I have to chase you through the ballroom as well.

JUSTINE

No. And you'd better stop chasing me. I have work to do.

HENRY

Stop chasing you. Never. I'll be chasing you when you're eighty.

JUSTINE

If you live that long.

HENRY

You'll pay for that. That's two kisses you owe me.

JUSTINE

You'll just have to wait until tomorrow to collect your kiss.

HENRY

I'll collect it right now.

HENRY takes JUSTINE in his arms as ELIZABETH enters. The TWO of them break apart quickly.

ELIZABETH

I am sorry. I didn't know anyone was here.

HENRY

It's all right, Elizabeth. I was just on my way back to the party. Are you coming?

ELIZABETH

No. I'd rather not just now.

HENRY

(Ready to leave) Justine?

JUSTINE

In a moment, Henry.

HENRY exits.

JUSTINE

Is something wrong, Elizabeth? Does Madame need me for anything?

ELIZABETH

No. No. Everything is going well.

JUSTINE

Then why are you here? You should be at your party.

ELIZABETH

I just needed to be alone for a moment. What were you and Henry...?

JUSTINE

Oh, Elizabeth. He just asked me to marry him.

ELIZABETH

Did he? That's wonderful for you. Did you say yes?

JUSTINE

Of course. I can't believe it, Elizabeth. I only hope we will be as happy as you and Victor.

ELIZABETH

Don't hope for that, Justine.

JUSTINE

But Elizabeth, Victor loves you so much. How can you help but be happy?

ELIZABETH

I am not so sure that he does love me, Justine.

JUSTINE

You mustn't think that.

ELIZABETH

Then why has he been locking himself up in that laboratory day and night? Why does he always find excuses not to talk with me?

JUSTINE

It's his work. He is just preoccupied with it.

ELIZABETH

I thought that at first. But tonight. How could he leave me like that to greet all our friends alone... and then when he arrived, he said nothing. He doesn't like this engagement, Justine. What am I to do?

JUSTINE

It's not true...you'll see...

VICTOR enters looking for ELIZABETH.

VICTOR

Elizabeth? Why did you run away like that? Justine, may I talk with Elizabeth?

JUSTINE

I was just going.

JUSTINE exits.

VICTOR

Elizabeth? What is wrong?

ELIZABETH

It would be better if we called off the engagement.

VICTOR

You don't mean it?

ELIZABETH

I do mean it.

VICTOR

Why, Elizabeth?

ELIZABETH

You don't really want to marry me, do you?

VICTOR

No. That's not true.

ELIZABETH

Isn't it? You avoid me. You spend all your days and most of your nights in the laboratory. And when you are here, you are not really with me. You're always preoccupied with your work, but you never share it.

VICTOR

I can't, Elizabeth. You wouldn't understand.

ELIZABETH

Wouldn't I? I've always understood. I haven't changed. I still love you. But you have changed. I would rather end it here and now than force you into marriage.

VICTOR

Elizabeth, do you remember when my parents brought you to this house?

ELIZABETH

Yes, of course.

VICTOR

You were so little – so fragile. I thought you were the most beautiful thing I had ever seen in my life. Then Mother said, "This is Elizabeth. She is going to live with us. We've brought her here for you." I knew right then that I wanted you forever. That is why we are getting married, Elizabeth. I never meant to cause you pain. We will be married. As soon as my work is finished.

ELIZABETH

You'll never shut me out again, Victor?

VICTOR

Never.

ELIZABETH

You must share your work with me.

VICTOR

Soon. Now, may we announce our engagement?

ELIZABETH

Yes. Victor? I love you.

VICTOR

And I love you. More than anything in the world.

MADAME

(Entering) We are all waiting – waiting to toast the happy couple.

VICTOR

Are you ready to go back now?

ELIZABETH

Oh, yes.

MADAME

We have a lot to celebrate.

VICTOR

Yes, we do. We certainly do.

BLACKOUT.

ACT I; SCENE IV

AT RISE: It is morning several weeks later. The CREATURE is seated at a table in the laboratory. In front of him are the remains of a simple breakfast. His face is still bandaged. HE is holding a mirror and attempting to examine himself. VICTOR enters carrying a bag filled with medical instruments, an umbrella and a cup of coffee.

VICTOR

Good Morning.

CREATURE

Good Morning, Victor Frankenstein.

VICTOR

How are you this morning?

CREATURE

I am fine, thank you. And how are you?

VICTOR

I am fine, thank you. You slept late this morning.

CREATURE

Yes, I slept a long time.

VICTOR

Did you dream?

CREATURE

I do not understand. What is dream?

VICTOR

Your mind relives an experience you have had, or imagines one and you respond to it in your sleep in much the same manner as you would while you are awake. A dream is an emotional release.

CREATURE

Emotion. I am sorry, Victor Frankenstein, I still do not understand.

VICTOR

When you dream, your mind takes a journey. You see and hear people, and you talk to them in your dream. And when you awaken, your mind comes back to reality – the here and now.

CREATURE

I understand that, now. I have done that in my sleep.

VICTOR

That's good. Now, do you know what day it is?

CREATURE

Yes. Today you take away the bandages from my face.

VICTOR

That's right. Can you tell me how old you are today?

CREATURE

Yes. I am four weeks and two days old. That is thirty days.

VICTOR

Excellent. Now, drink.

The CREATURE takes the cup and brings it to his lips. HE sniffs the fragrance, likes what HE smells and gulps the liquid. It burns his mouth, and HE spits the liquid out.

CREATURE

Hot! It is hot.

The CREATURE picks up the cup again and carefully blows on the liquid to cool it. VICTOR laughs, amused at this imitation of his own habits.

VICTOR

Can you tell me what you are drinking?

CREATURE

It is coffee.

VICTOR

And how is coffee made?

CREATURE

You take beans from the pot, grind them up and then pour boiling water over them.

VICTOR

Very good! Very, very good. You never forget anything I tell you, do you?

CREATURE

No. If you wish me to forget something, I will do it. What is it you wish me to forget?

VICTOR

(Laughing) I don't want you to forget anything. I am simply very pleased – and amazed – with how quickly you learn, and how you are able to remember everything Henry and I tell you.

CREATURE

My remembering makes you happy? Then I will remember everything, always. But now, where is Henry Clerval? I have questions for him about this book.

VICTOR

Henry will be along in a little while. He awoke later than I did. I left him at breakfast. He will be here soon. Tell me about your book. How much of it have you read?

CREATURE
All of it.

VICTOR
Surely not.

CREATURE
I have had it for two days already.

VICTOR
Read something for me.

CREATURE
What would you like me to read?

VICTOR
Anything.

The CREATURE opens the book to a much-read page and begins reading the generations of Sham from the book of Genesis. (Chapter 11, Verse 10)

CREATURE
“These are the generations of Sham: ‘Sham was a hundred years old when he begot Arphaxad, two years after the flood. And Sham lived after he begot Arphaxad, five hundred years, and begot sons and daughters. And Arphaxad lived thirty-five years and begot Sale. And Arphaxad lived after he begot Sale, three hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters. Sale also lived thirty years and begot Heber. And Sale lived after he begot Heber, four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters...”

VICTOR
(Stopping him after a time) That’s very good.

CREATURE
But, Victor Frankenstein, what about my question?

VICTOR
What is it?

CREATURE
It is this. You have a name. It is Victor Frankenstein. Henry Clerval also has a name, and each of the people in this book, the Bible, has a name. Each person’s name is different. I understand that you know who you are by the name that you have. But I do not have a name. Why is this?

VICTOR

I suppose it is because Henry and I have not been able to choose a name for you, yet.

CREATURE

Why not? Is it so difficult? There are many names. Surely one of them is right for me?

VICTOR

I am sure one is.

CREATURE

Then what am I to be called? When people meet me how will they know me? How will I tell them who I am?

VICTOR

You will have a name. I'll talk to Henry, and we will pick a name for you, a very special name. We will give you a name people will remember. But you will have to wait for it. Will that be all right?

CREATURE

Yes, Victor Frankenstein. If my name will be special, I will wait.

HENRY enters from outside.

HENRY

Good Morning. Isn't it a glorious day?

VICTOR

Good Morning, Henry.

CREATURE

Good Morning, Henry Clerval.

HENRY

(To the CREATURE) How are you this morning?

CREATURE

I am fine, thank you. And how are you?

HENRY

I am fine, thank you.

VICTOR

Your pupil, Henry, has begun keeping disgraceful hours.

HENRY

You were up late last night?

CREATURE

Yes. I was reading your book. And I have a question for you.

HENRY

Oh, yes? What is it?

CREATURE

In this book, the one that is called the Bible, there are a great many little books, and the most interesting ones are about families. But I do not understand what families are? Can you explain them to me?

HENRY

Yes, I think I can. You see...a man meets woman, and if he likes her...loves her ...very much and she loves him...well...then they marry. Married people have children. That is...the women give birth. Uh...they are the mothers and the men are the fathers. The children are the sons and daughters...and...they are all related because the sons and daughters are made up of the mothers and fathers. Do you see?

VICTOR

(Laughing) Very good, Henry. Very, very good.

CREATURE

I think the married people must do something to make the children happen. In this book called the "Song of Solomon..." *(The CREATURE opens the book to show Henry.)*

VICTOR

I think we'd better leave that until later. You're embarrassing Henry.

CREATURE

I do not understand.

VICTOR

You will, soon enough. Now, I think we ought to get to work.

HENRY

I can hardly wait to see what you look like.

CREATURE

I hope I look like you, Victor Frankenstein. It would please me very much to have features like my father.

VICTOR

No, no my friend. I am not your father. No woman gave birth to you. I am not your father. I am your Creator.

CREATURE

You are God, then?

VICTOR

No. No, I am not God. Though I did make you.

CREATURE

I understand. We are not a family, then?

VICTOR

No.

CREATURE

But you have a family?

VICTOR

Yes, I do.

CREATURE

And you have a family, also, Henry Clerval?

HENRY

Of course.

CREATURE

And do you both know women whom you will marry?

VICTOR

I do. I can't speak for Henry, however.

HENRY

Yes. I do know a woman I plan to marry.

CREATURE

Who is she?

HENRY

That is a secret.

CREATURE

What is a secret?

HENRY

Something you are sworn not to tell others.

VICTOR

(Attempting to cut away the bandages during this discussion.) Now hold still. Both of you.
(To the CREATURE) I don't want to cut you.

VICTOR clips away the bandages. The CREATURE picks up his mirror and holds it in front of his face. HENRY hands VICTOR the tools he needs and takes away the bandages. THEY get their first look at the Creature's face and recoil in horror. The CREATURE, having no idea that he is ugly is pleased with what he sees, at first.

CREATURE

Now, I know who I am. But I am not like you or Henry Clerval, am I, Victor Frankenstein. Is this good?

HENRY

Everyone is different.

VICTOR

You are remarkable.

HENRY

Victor!

An uncomfortable silence follows.

CREATURE

You say nothing, Victor Frankenstein. You are not pleased with how I look?

VICTOR

Of course. It will be better in time.

HENRY begins packing up the medical instruments. HE also takes the mirror away from the CREATURE and packs that as well.

VICTOR

Henry and I must go now. I want you to stay here and continue to study. Learn all you can. Don't be afraid to try new things. This is your home. You can do anything you like here. Do you understand?

CREATURE

Yes, I am free to do, as I like. I am to learn as much as I can.

VICTOR

Good. Now, Henry and I have some important matters to discuss. We have to leave you for awhile.

CREATURE

I am lonely. I am lonely when you are not here.

VICTOR takes a cloak from a hook on the wall, wraps it about the Creature's shoulders, embraces him and hurries out without looking at him again. HENRY follows. The CREATURE gets up and watches them go. It starts to rain. HE watches the rain in fascination, and then remembers Victor's umbrella. The CREATURE takes the umbrella and places it over his arm as he has seen Victor do, and then exits the laboratory.

BLACKOUT.

ACT I; SCENE V

AT RISE: A road just outside the gates of the Frankenstein estate. It is late afternoon, and it is raining. JUSTINE enters carrying a wrapped package lantern and takes shelter under a tree. SHE ventures out and is pleased by the view as the rain stops. The CREATURE enters holding the open umbrella above his head. HE is attracted by the light of Justine's lantern and does not really see Justine at first. JUSTINE is unaware of the CREATURE until HE speaks.

CREATURE

Good evening.

JUSTINE

Good evening, sir. I did not see you there.

CREATURE

Who are you?

JUSTINE

You are very forward.

CREATURE

I do not understand.

JUSTINE

I think you do. I am not accustomed to strange men appearing out of nowhere and asking me my name.

CREATURE

You are getting wet. You must stand under my umbrella with me.

JUSTINE

As I said, sir. You are forward. I do not live far from here. If you let me past, I can get home before the storm gets any worse.

CREATURE

But I do not want you to go. I have never met anyone like you before.

JUSTINE

(Brushing off his remark) And I have never met anyone like you, either. Do you live near here?

CREATURE

Yes. Near the lake.

JUSTINE

Well, you can't have lived there very long, or I am sure I would have met you by now.

CREATURE

No. I have not lived there very long.

JUSTINE

Oh, I am getting very wet. I must be going. Madame Frankenstein is expecting me?

CREATURE

You know Victor Frankenstein?

JUSTINE

Of course. I live in his house. Are you a friend of his?

CREATURE

Yes. Victor Frankenstein is my friend.

JUSTINE

Then I will see you again soon. *(SHE starts on her way.)*

CREATURE

Wait. You will be wet before you get home. Here, take the umbrella.

The CREATURE hands the umbrella to JUSTINE. SHE is unable to take it because of her package and the lantern. The CREATURE takes the lantern and holds it, allowing light to shine on his face. JUSTINE sees it for the first time and faints. The CREATURE goes to help her. SHE recovers, sees him again and begins to scream.

JUSTINE

No! Help! Henry, oh Henry!!

CREATURE

No! Be quiet. Please! I will not harm you. Please be quiet! I only want to be your friend.

The CREATURE continues to hold Justine tightly. JUSTINE struggles screaming. The CREATURE grips tighter. JUSTINE's neck snaps. SHE is quiet.

CREATURE

There. You are quiet. Do you sleep? But you will get wet.

The CREATURE takes the cape from around his shoulders and carefully wraps her in it.

CREATURE

Here. This will keep you dry until you awake.

The CREATURE watches JUSTINE for a moment, picks up the lantern and exits.

BLACKOUT.

ACT I; SCENE VI

AT RISE: The laboratory. VICTOR enters to find it empty. HE looks for the CREATURE though HE seems to know he will not find him there. The CREATURE enters.

VICTOR

Where have you been?

CREATURE

I have been outside.

VICTOR

And who gave you permission to leave.

CREATURE

You said, Victor Frankenstein, that I might do what I liked if I thought I would learn. I went out to learn.

VICTOR

You should never have been out. You don't know a thing about the world. Anything might have happened to you.

CREATURE

Is it always so wet and rainy?

VICTOR

Sit down. *(Pause)* I said, sit down! Now, listen to me. I want you to promise me that you will not leave here again without my permission. Is that clear?

CREATURE

But you said that I might...

VICTOR

I did not say that you could leave this cottage. Do you understand?

CREATURE

Yes, Victor Frankenstein. Are you angry? Do not be angry. I do not like it when people are angry.

VICTOR

Who has ever been angry with you before?

CREATURE

I met a woman. She became angry. She cried out.

VICTOR

What! Where did you meet this woman?

CREATURE

Not far from here. On that wet road that leads to the big stone house.

VICTOR

What did you do?

CREATURE

I spoke to her. She was different from me. She was soft. I had never seen a woman before.

VICTOR

What happened?

CREATURE

She was wet. I gave her the umbrella. She cried out. I calmed her. She lies sleeping beneath a tree. I covered her.

VICTOR

What did you do to her?

CREATURE

Nothing. She is dreaming.

HENRY enters carrying the Creature's cloak.

HENRY

Victor. It's Justine. She's dead.

VICTOR

What did you say?

HENRY

Justine's been murdered, Victor. Her neck was broken.

VICTOR

Where was she found?

HENRY

On the road. Not fifty yards from the gate. She was covered with this.

HENRY produces the cape.

VICTOR

(To the CREATURE) What did you do to that girl?

CREATURE

I do not understand. I left the woman sleeping. What does murder mean?

HENRY

You did this? Why? What had she done to you? How did you get out?

VICTOR

We left the door unlocked. He thought we had given him permission.

HENRY

Permission? To kill?

CREATURE

Do not be angry. I did not kill. I left the woman sleeping. She cried out. I told her I meant her no harm and she became calm.

HENRY

She screamed when she saw your face. You're ugly. Do you know what you are? You are a monster. You're not a man. You were grown here on dead men's bones ... dead men! Do you hear me? You were only meant to bring death.

VICTOR

No! Stop it!

HENRY

I'll see that thing destroyed, Victor. You don't understand, do you? Justine and I were going to be married, and now she's dead.

CREATURE

I did not mean to hurt anyone, Henry Clerval. I did not mean to hurt the woman you would marry. Please forgive me.

HENRY

Forgive you. I'll see you dead first.

VICTOR

You don't mean it.

HENRY

I do.

CREATURE

I meant no harm, truly.

HENRY charges the CREATURE. The CREATURE picks him up with one hand and tosses him to the floor.

CREATURE

No. No! (*HE runs out the door.*)

VICTOR

Do you know what you've done?

HENRY

Only too well. I've helped you make the monster that has destroyed my life. Now we must find it and destroy it. Are you coming, Victor?

VICTOR stares at Henry in shock. HENRY runs out the door after the Creature.

VICTOR

Henry. Henry!

VICTOR follows.

BLACKOUT.

ACT I; SCENE VII

AT RISE: The cemetery after the Funeral of JUSTINE. HENRY, VICTOR, ELIZABETH and MADAME FRANKENSTEIN are gathered around Justine's grave.

VICTOR

We'd better go home. It's getting chilly. Mother, Elizabeth, Henry?

HENRY

In a moment. Just another moment.

ELIZABETH

Henry, there is nothing you can do for Justine here. Please come back to the house.

HENRY

No. I can't leave Justine here like this.

MADAME

Henry, Justine is dead.

HENRY

You are right. And I can never ask her forgiveness. Don't you see?

VICTOR

No, we don't see, Henry. Stop punishing yourself. There is nothing anyone could have done to prevent this.

HENRY

Isn't there?

ELIZABETH

Henry, Justine was attacked on the road by some stranger. It was a senseless death, I know, but you are not at fault. How could you be?

HENRY

I could have prevented it.

ELIZABETH

How? By staying at her side every minute of every day? By sheltering her from life? She never would have tolerated it.

MADAME

Don't you see, Henry? It does no one any good to try and place the blame. You'll only torture yourself. It was an accident, a tragic accident.

HENRY

No, Madame. I think it was meant to happen. I should have known something like this would happen the moment I joined Victor in his work.

MADAME

Henry, this is madness. What could your work have to do with Justine?

HENRY

Everything. You see, Victor and I were attempting to create...

VICTOR

(Interrupting) What Henry means is that the hours we spent away from you contributed to what happened.

MADAME

It's time we all went back to the house.

HENRY

Madame, I would rather be alone for awhile.

MADAME

Elizabeth? Victor?

VICTOR

In a moment, Mother. I want to speak with Henry alone.

MADAME

Don't be long – either of you.

MADAME and ELIZABETH exit.

VICTOR

What are you trying to do? Destroy everything we've worked for? If I hadn't stopped you, you would have told Mother and Elizabeth everything.

HENRY

Shouldn't they know, Victor? Shouldn't they know what kind of monster is waiting out there in the woods? Is your Mother or Elizabeth going to be next, Victor?

VICTOR

Henry, stop it.

HENRY

That's just what I want to do. I want to stop this insanity now, before anyone else is hurt. That Creature of ours is evil, Victor.

VICTOR

Justine's death was an accident, Henry. Nothing more. We cannot let it interfere with our work.

HENRY

I did not know you could be so callous.

VICTOR

I am not callous. Justine grew up in my house. I loved her, and I will mourn her. But stopping our work and destroying the Creature isn't going to bring her back. You will find another woman to love someday, Henry. But there will never be another Adam.

HENRY

Can you hear yourself, Victor?

VICTOR

Henry, this had been your life's work. To give up now would be to destroy everything. Would Justine want you to give up? Would she want to see you immerse yourself in grief and grow to be an embittered, lonely man?

HENRY

Stop it, Victor.

VICTOR

You began this work for Justine and people like her. You said, Henry, that man should only rise in life according to his merit, and that the best way to show man how to do this was to give mankind an example – a new man totally devoid of the old morés, the old prejudices. Henry you can still do this. It can be your monument to Justine.

HENRY

That Creature killed her, Victor. He murdered her, and then he ran away. He is a murderer. I should have known that the moment I saw his face.

VICTOR

Please, Henry, don't give up.

HENRY

I haven't given up, Victor. I won't help you conceal – and then promote – a murderer.

VICTOR

What are you going to do?

HENRY

Find him. He must be destroyed, Victor. It's the only way either one of us can have a life.

HENRY exits leaving VICTOR alone.

BLACKOUT.

ACT I; SCENE VIII

AT RISE: The laboratory. VICTOR is at the back staring intently out the window. The CREATURE enters. HE looks around quickly, then heads for his table and chair and seats himself. VICTOR hears him and turns around.

VICTOR

Where have you been?

CREATURE

Hiding. In the woods.

VICTOR

Why did you hide?

CREATURE

You and Henry Clerval were angry with me.

VICTOR

That's no reason to hide in the woods.

CREATURE

It is a very good reason.

VICTOR

What do you mean?

CREATURE

I killed that woman. Henry Clerval said so. I touched her, and then she was dead – not sleeping. You know it. Henry Clerval knows it, and I know it. I have listened to many people talking. They have all spoken of the killer who attacked the woman.

VICTOR

No one need ever know it was you. You must forget about the woman. The people you heard talking will forget as well.

CREATURE

You are wrong, Victor Frankenstein.

VICTOR

You are not a murderer. No one need ever know that you were the one who killed Justine. We will go on as before.

CREATURE

It will be a secret, then? You are not punished for the wrong you do if it is a secret. That is strange. And this secret is not like the one Henry Clerval told me of. That was pleasant.

VICTOR

You are very perceptive, but you have much to learn. Most secrets are not pleasant. That is why they are kept.

CREATURE

I am a secret, am I not?

VICTOR

What did you say?

CREATURE

I am a secret. No one knows of my existence save you and Henry Clerval and the woman, Justine, but she is dead, now, and will tell no one. Let us keep it that way.

VICTOR

I don't understand what you mean.

CREATURE

I ask you, please, let me remain a secret.

VICTOR

I will not. You are superior, and you have work to do.

CREATURE

But I must remain a secret, Victor Frankenstein. I am ugly. So ugly that people run from me. I cannot live with people who think me ugly. If I do, I may kill again.

VICTOR

It won't happen again. You are special.

CREATURE

I am not special. I am ugly – a monster. There is nothing you can do to change it. I will remain a secret, Victor Frankenstein.

VICTOR

But how will you remain a secret. You can't stay here in this room forever. Sooner or later, someone will discover you.

CREATURE

And when they do, will I kill them? I wanted to kill Henry Clerval. He attacked me and I thought, "I must kill him." That is why I ran.

VICTOR

Don't you see? You ran because you were threatened. You are not a killer.

CREATURE

But I have killed. That is why I must leave here and live in secret.

VICTOR

Leave? But where will you go?

CREATURE

I have read in Henry Clerval's books that there are many places in this world where men do not live. I will choose one of those places and go and live there.

VICTOR

But how will you get there? Your face?

CREATURE

I will travel among men – in hiding – never letting them know I am there until I reach a place where there are no more men. That is where I will live.

VICTOR

Alone? You'll never be able to stand it. You could not bear it when Henry and I left you alone for a few hours.

CREATURE

I will not be alone, Victor Frankenstein.

VICTOR

Of course you will.

CREATURE

I will not be alone because you will create a companion for me.

VICTOR

What? A companion? How?

CREATURE

You will make this companion as you made me.

VICTOR

I won't do it. You will remain here with me and do what you were created to do.

CREATURE

I will leave, and I will have a companion. You made me, Victor Frankenstein. I did not ask you to bring me into this world. I was better left unmade. But I am here, now. I live and I must have the things I need. You have made me so that I cannot live with men. You have made me so that I cannot live alone. I am yours. Give me what I need, or you will regret your decision.

VICTOR

Do not threaten me.

CREATURE

I do not threaten. I only tell you what I know to be. If I am not allowed to go away with a companion, we will both regret what will happen. You gave me life. Now you must give me a woman. I have known that ever since I saw Justine. Give me a woman, like myself. She would be my friend, my companion. I would never be lonely. And I would have no reason to curse you the way I have cursed you.

VICTOR

And if I say no.

CREATURE

You will not say it.

The CREATURE hands Victor the bottle of chemicals that bestowed life on him.

VICTOR

(Thinks carefully) You will quit the society of man the moment I deliver this woman into your hands?

CREATURE

I will.

VICTOR

Do you swear it?

CREATURE

You have my word.

The CREATURE and VICTOR clasp hands as the LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT I

ACT II; SCENE I

AT RISE: The cemetery. HENRY stands beside Justine's grave. HE holds a pistol in his hand, which HE cocks. Just as HE seems about to use it, VICTOR calls out from OFF.

VICTOR

(From OFF) Henry! *(Entering)* Henry, I need you help. The Creature is back.

HENRY

Where is he?

VICTOR

He wants to leave, Henry.

HENRY

What do you mean?

VICTOR

He's not a killer. He never meant to harm Justine.

HENRY

Victor.

VICTOR

Listen to me. When he picked you up in the laboratory he could have killed you. That's why he ran. He was afraid. Afraid he might do it. He doesn't want to kill anyone, Henry. He never did.

HENRY

What does that change? He is still a monster. He is still strong enough to crush a man with his hands. Justine is still dead, Victor. Do you expect me to go back to our work because he said he doesn't want to kill?

VICTOR

No. I ask you to help me prevent more killings. The Creature understands his capabilities – better than you or I. He wants to go away where no man will ever find him. He will live in self-imposed exile.

HENRY

Live entirely alone? He couldn't stand it. No man could.

VICTOR

He doesn't want to go alone, Henry. He's asked for a companion like himself. He will take her and leave.

HENRY

No.

VICTOR

Oh, yes, Henry. Don't you see? It's the only way.

HENRY

Why didn't you kill him and have done with it?

VICTOR

Why didn't you? You said you would the day Justine died. But here you stand, day after day. You haven't made a single attempt. You can't do it. And neither can I. He's part of us, Henry. It took years of our lives to make him and if we destroy him, we destroy our own lives, too. You'll never be able to kill him, Henry. But you can be rid of him. He will be gone forever.

HENRY

And all our problems will be solved?

VICTOR

Yes.

HENRY

I don't think so.

VICTOR

We can't bring Justine back

HENRY

I'm not asking for that.

VICTOR

Then what do you want.

HENRY

A guarantee. I want a guarantee that he will never be back. I want to know that when he's gone, it will be as though he was in his tomb.

VICTOR

I can offer you that guarantee.

HENRY

How?

VICTOR

I have his word.

HENRY

What good is that?

VICTOR

He has never learned to break his word, Henry. He wouldn't know how. He knows nothing of deceit. If he says he will never come back, he never will.

HENRY

If only I could be as sure as you.

VICTOR

Think about it, Henry. Please. I can't complete the work without you.

HENRY

All right, Victor. But I cannot promise that I will give you the answer you want.

VICTOR

(Taking the gun from Henry) You will, Henry. You will.

HENRY leaves VICTOR alone by Justine's grave. The CREATURE enters. HE makes a sound. Startled, VICTOR turns towards him still holding the gun.

CREATURE

I do not think Henry Clerval will help you.

VICTOR

What are you doing here?

CREATURE

I wanted to know what you were going to do.

VICTOR

I would never lie to you. You know that.

CREATURE

How will you make the companion if Henry Clerval will not help you?

VICTOR

I do not know.

CREATURE

If there was already a body, could you not bestow life on it?

VICTOR

Yes. But there is no body.

CREATURE

There is the woman Justine. You could make her live again.

VICTOR

No.

CREATURE

Yes. She would not be the same woman any longer. She would be new – a creature like myself. This is the woman I want, Victor Frankenstein. She would be a companion I could love. She would be alive, not dead. She would not know the word ugly. And I would be happy. Give her to me and I will go.

VICTOR

You demand too much.

CREATURE

I demand too little. Give me this woman or you will curse the day you were created. *(Pause)* We will begin tonight.

BLACKOUT.

ACT II; SCENE II

AT RISE: The laboratory. The CREATURE enters carrying JUSTINE followed by VICTOR. THEY lay her down upon a table. As VICTOR begins preparing Justine's body for the operation, the CREATURE caresses her face and hands.

VICTOR

Get away from her.

CREATURE

She is mine, Victor Frankenstein.

VICTOR

Not yet.

CREATURE

She will be. Do not harm her.

VICTOR

I am only doing what is necessary to restore her life. You must be still.

The CREATURE turns, picks up the bottle with the fluid that animated him and hands it to VICTOR. HENRY calls from OFFSTAGE.

HENRY

Victor! Victor, I want to talk to you.

The CREATURE covers Justine.

VICTOR

Have you come to help me?

HENRY

(Entering) No

VICTOR

(Preventing HENRY from coming closer) Then go away.

HENRY

(Pushing past Victor) You must hear me out, Victor. I can't let you do this.

VICTOR

I won't let you stop me, Henry.

HENRY

(Seeing the shrouded body on the table) That's her isn't it? You've started without me.

HENRY moves toward the table on which JUSTINE lies.

HENRY

Is she going to be as ugly, Victor?

HENRY reaches out and throws back the cloth.

HENRY

Victor, no.

VICTOR

Henry, I had no choice.

HENRY

How could you do this to me?

VICTOR

Henry, please.

HENRY

You are giving Justine to him? Justine is going to be a monster like him? She is going to bear his children? I won't let you do it, Victor. It was bad enough when I thought you would make another like him out of assorted parts. But Justine, no!

HENRY throws himself upon Victor and beats him with his fists and grabs for his neck. The CREATURE steps forward and grabs Henry by the throat, dragging him over Justine's body and breaking his neck in the process. VICTOR pushes past the Creature to get to his friend.

VICTOR

He's dead.

CREATURE

I could not let him kill you.

VICTOR

He would not have harmed me.

CREATURE

He would have killed you, if he could. Now, proceed. I must have my companion.

VICTOR

I will not. Henry was right. You are a murderer. And I will not continue. I will not give you a wife. There will be no more of you.

VICTOR picks up the bottle and empties it.

CREATURE

You yourself will take a wife soon. You will have companionship, solace. Yet, you deny me this? I who have nothing must suffer, while you... *(Pause)* Victor Frankenstein, you will never be rid of me. Remember this: I will be with you on your wedding night. I will be with you.

THE LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK.

ACT II; SCENE III

AT RISE: Walton's ship. WALTON is reading from the diary. VICTOR is seated on the cot.

WALTON

“And as I looked at the lifeless body of my friend, and at the Creature who had destroyed him, I understood at last the evil I had spawned.” *(Putting down the diary)* This much is clear. You do not come from another explorer's ship.

VICTOR

Then you will let me go.

WALTON

There still remains the problem of my men and the devil on the ice.

VICTOR

I cannot help you there, Walton. There is a Creature on the ice. He is an evil that will keep coming closer and closer.

WALTON

What are you saying?

VICTOR

Let me go and he will not harm you. He wants only me.

WALTON

I do not believe there is anything to fear on the ice. My men, however, feel otherwise. So you, my friend, will tell them that it was you and you alone who called out to the ship.

VICTOR

And if I refuse?

WALTON

My men will mutiny and you and I will be buried at sea. *(Changing his tactic)* Even if my men would let you go, how far can you get? Your hands and feet are frostbitten, you are half starved. You couldn't walk fifty yards from the ship. If you expect to find this Creature of yours, you will need my help.

VICTOR

Your help?

WALTON

Yes. You know you cannot continue your journey without help. I am offering you that. Tell my men there is nothing to fear. Tell them that you were the one who cried out, if necessary. Help me to claim the North Pole, and I will help you find your Creature.

VICTOR

You would do this?

WALTON

We are tied together in this. I cannot get what I have come for without your help, and neither can you. But together, we can both get what we want. Now, do we have an agreement?

VICTOR does not answer.

WALTON

I don't see that you have a choice.

VICTOR

Agreed.

WALTON

What will you do when you find this Creature of yours?

VICTOR

I do not know. When we find him, I want you to leave us alone.

WALTON

But how will you get back to your home?

VICTOR

I will not go back.

WALTON

But what of your laboratory, your research, your new Adam? What about Elizabeth?

VICTOR

Elizabeth?

WALTON

Isn't Elizabeth the woman you plan to marry?

VICTOR

I am married to her already.

WALTON picks up the diary to look for a passage he has missed.

VICTOR

You won't find it there, Walton. That history ends with the death of Henry Clerval.

WALTON sets the book down and prepares to listen. HE is now well and truly hooked.

VICTOR

After the death of Henry, the Creature fled. My family and friends believed his death to be a suicide. I did not disillusion them. Unable to bear what I had done, I locked my laboratory, and proceeded to build my life anew. I devoted myself to Elizabeth. And during those months before the wedding, Elizabeth was so happy – happier than I had ever seen her. Still visions of the avenging Creature would come upon me in fits. When this happened I would sail my boat upon the lake and endeavor to forget his words: “I will be with you on your wedding night.” They came more frequently as the wedding day grew near. I began to carry a pistol, and I resolved that I would meet him. I would make safe the house and face the fiend alone.

BLACKOUT.

ACT II; SCENE IV

AT RISE: The study of Frankenstein's house after the wedding of VICTOR and ELIZABETH. As the lights come up, ELIZABETH is alone on stage, still in her wedding dress and veil. VICTOR enters.

ELIZABETH

Have the guests all gone?

VICTOR

Every last one of them. Mother is upstairs – asleep, already.

ELIZABETH

(As THEY embrace) Oh, Victor, everything was wonderful...the church, the flowers, the little girls in their dresses...

VICTOR

(Stopping her with a kiss) When you looked up at me in the church, I thought I would cry you were so beautiful. *(Pause. Then with great sadness as VICTOR releases himself from Elizabeth's embrace.)* This has been the happiest day of my life. You have made it that.

ELIZABETH

Victor, what is it?

VICTOR

If only you knew what I have suffered, and what I must yet endure.

ELIZABETH

Victor, don't you see? Henry and Justine are at peace. And we are starting a new life together. That is what matters. I will have no talk of death tonight.

VICTOR

(Rising suddenly) Wait for me here. *(Pausing to kiss her)* You are dearer to me than my life.

ELIZABETH

Victor, I want you to know that this night...

VICTOR

(Kissing her again) Peace, peace. This night and all others shall be safe.

VICTOR exits. ELIZABETH follows him to the door and watches him go, perplexed. SHE turns back into the room and removes her wedding veil. SHE then lets down her hair and enjoys the feeling of release that comes from not carrying the weight of it on her head. SHE settles herself on the couch, closing her eyes, waiting for VICTOR to return. The CREATURE enters the room. HE has been waiting outside the house. HE steps silently behind Elizabeth and places his hand in her hair. ELIZABETH reaches for his hand, thinking it is VICTOR. The CREATURE continues to fondle her hair for a few moments. ELIZABETH caresses his hand. Suddenly SHE realizes this is not Victor's touch. SHE attempts to stand. The CREATURE tightens his grip on her hair and her throat and throws her backwards against the couch, breaking her neck. HE covers her with her wedding veil, opens the door to the room and exits.

VICTOR enters and sees ELIZABETH. HE throws off the veil, and takes her in his arms realizing she is dead.

VICTOR

No!

BLACKOUT.

ACT II; SCENE V

*AT RISE: A hillside on the Frankenstein estate.
VICTOR stands alone, holding the body of
Elizabeth.*

VICTOR

Come out, damn you. Come out and face me.

CREATURE

(Appearing in the shadows) Give me your hand, and then we will talk.

VICTOR

To my enemy?

CREATURE

I am not your enemy, Victor Frankenstein; I am your Creature. I had hoped to be your friend, but even this you denied me.

VICTOR

I denied you nothing. I gave you your life.

CREATURE

You should have given me the things I need – companionship, identity. But I forget. You have given me a name. You said that you would find a name that was special, one that people would remember. And I have that now. Murderer. Bringer of death. How appropriate.

VICTOR

It is appropriate. You killed Elizabeth. Why did she have to die?

CREATURE

So that we could be together. At last we meet as equals. I who am denied a place in this world, and you, who have thrown yours away.

VICTOR

No. You took it from me. You murdered my wife. *(Pulling out a gun)* I will see you in hell before this night is over.

CREATURE

You cannot send me to hell. I am there already.

There is a PAUSE. VICTOR does not fire.

CREATURE

You cannot kill me. As you said once to Henry Clerval, I am a part of you, now. If you destroy me, you destroy yourself.

VICTOR

I will destroy you.

CREATURE

No. We are bound together. You are my Creator. You gave me life, and in doing so, gave me power over you. I will leave your world now and go to the frozen wastes at the top of the earth. Follow me there. And when you do, when you no longer find solace in family or society, we will meet again. Follow me to the top of the world where there are no men, no laws. Follow me and we will settle our business.

VICTOR

I will. I swear I will.

CREATURE

I have your word?

VICTOR

Yes, damn you!

CREATURE

I fear your punishment more than my own. It will be far more terrible. I have broken the laws of men, but you have tampered with the laws of your Creator. And now you are bound to follow me. Remember this: You will have no life unless it is with me.

BLACKOUT.

ACT II; SCENE VI

AT RISE: The study. It has been closed up. Dust covers are placed over all the furniture. MADAME FRANKENSTEIN enters with VICTOR. SHE begins removing the dust covers from various pieces of furniture. Then SHE stops and takes a framed portrait off a shelf, and studies it. VICTOR enters the room.

VICTOR

Our trunks are upstairs.

MADAME

It is good to be home.

THEY embrace.

VICTOR

Yes. It is.

MADAME

We must start again, Victor – the two of us.

VICTOR

I know, Mother.

MADAME uncovers the couch as SHE reminisces. VICTOR recoils, remembering finding the murdered Elizabeth there.

MADAME

We shared so much in this room. Your father and I would read to you when you were little, and you listened so intently ... trying to take in every word. Do you remember the time you built and lit the fire, but didn't know to open the flue? There you stood in the middle of all that smoke ... it took us two weeks to air out this room. The smell just lingered...

VICTOR

Hickory.

MADAME

What?

VICTOR

Hickory wood. I built the fire with hickory wood.

MADAME

Elizabeth thought the whole house was burning down.

VICTOR

Have you looked out the window, Mother?

MADAME

Yes, Victor, I've seen.

VICTOR

It's gone. I've had the laboratory torn down.

MADAME

You can see all the way to the lake again. We could plant lilacs there, and sit by the shore and watch the moon rise. When we have parties in the summer, we can string lanterns from the house all the way down to the lake. I can just see the young ladies in their dresses catching the light, looking like fireflies in the dusk. And you and your friends standing watching and then deciding which ones you'll ask to dance.

VICTOR

I cannot stay.

MADAME

What did you say?

VICTOR

I cannot stay here, Mother.

MADAME

(Growing frightened) What do you mean?

VICTOR

I must go away.

MADAME

Where must you go?

VICTOR

Very far away.

MADAME

How long will you be gone?

VICTOR

A very long time.

MADAME

You are going very far away for a very long time? Victor, these are not answers. Where are you going?

VICTOR

To find the murderer, Mother.

MADAME

Do you know who he is?

VICTOR

Yes.

MADAME

Then why have you not spoken sooner?

VICTOR

Because I could not.

MADAME

Do you know where he is?

VICTOR

No. But I know where he will go and I will follow.

MADAME

And what will you do when you find him?

VICTOR

I will destroy him.

MADAME

And then you will come home again.

VICTOR says nothing.

MADAME

Tell me you will come home again.

VICTOR

I must answer for Justine and Henry and Elizabeth, Mother.

MADAME

You have nothing to answer for.

VICTOR

But I do. I am responsible. I created the instrument of their death. I must destroy it. Or be destroyed by it.

MADAME

What are you saying, Victor?

VICTOR

I am the killer, Mother. These hands caused their deaths. I am responsible. No one else. Only me. Do you understand now? It's as if I put my own hands around their necks... I must leave. I must. Or I will destroy you too.

MADAME says nothing.

VICTOR

Goodbye, Mother.

VICTOR exits.

BLACKOUT.

ACT II; SCENE VII

AT RISE: The frozen wasteland. VICTOR and WALTON enter. VICTOR is at the end of his strength. HE collapses against WALTON who lowers him to the ground.

VICTOR

Leave me here, Walton. I must meet the Creature alone.

WALTON

To stay here alone would be suicide. Give up this search and return with me.

VICTOR

In a little while, I will be dead. If I returned with you, it would be the same.

WALTON

You gave me the help I needed. I have reached my goal. You cannot expect me to return without keeping my part of the bargain.

VICTOR

But you have kept it. I am here. You owe me nothing more.

WALTON

What will you do?

VICTOR

I will wait. This is our meeting place. The Creature will find me soon. I told you, Walton, that I would not be returning. Now, if you are my friend, you will leave me.

WALTON

I will not be far away. If you should need me. If you should change your mind.

VICTOR

I will not...

WALTON

But to die here, alone...

CREATURE

(Entering) He will not be alone. I am here.

WALTON

(Shocked by the CREATURE's appearance, but steadfast) Will nothing satisfy you but his death? Is there to be no end to your revenge?

CREATURE

I do not seek revenge. I seek only to be one with my maker. You are here. Therefore, you must know my story. Do you not know the pain I have suffered? I have not come to destroy him.

VICTOR

(To WALTON) Go, my friend. Leave us to deal with each other. It is the best way.

CREATURE

You must.

WALTON

Yes.

VICTOR

Walton, take my diary. Keep it. Remember me, and my story.

WALTON

That is all I can do for you?

VICTOR

Yes.

WALTON

Find peace, my friend.

VICTOR

May you find it as well.

VICTOR hands WALTON the book. THEY clasp hands. WALTON exits.

CREATURE

We meet again, Victor Frankenstein.

VICTOR

Yes.

CREATURE

Give me your hand.

*VICTOR stretches out his hand. The
CREATURE clasps it in his own.*

VICTOR

I cannot feel it.

CREATURE

I will warm it for you.

*The CREATURE cups his hands around Victor's
and breathes warm air onto them.*

CREATURE

Have you come to revenge yourself for the loss of your wife?

VICTOR

I thought I had.

CREATURE

I thought that by denying you a wife, I would find an end to my pain. I was wrong. Afterward it increased a thousandfold. But I wanted you, even if you came only to punish me.

VICTOR

That is not why I've come, it seems.

CREATURE

But I deserve to be punished. You wanted a savior, and I have brought only death. Everything I touched I destroyed – even my friend.

VICTOR

It was my fault. I brought Henry to work with me. I asked him to do the impossible. You are blameless.

CREATURE

If it were only that simple, Victor Frankenstein. I too had a choice. If I had chosen differently...

VICTOR

But I defied God to make you.

CREATURE

We have destroyed each other. You must see that. It is the only way you can find peace.

VICTOR's head sinks against the Creature's chest.

CREATURE

Victor! Tell me you understand!

VICTOR raises a trembling hand towards the Creature's face. It drops.

CREATURE

Victor Frankenstein!

The CREATURE gathers Victor's body into his arms, and leans back as the LIGHTS SLOWLY FADE TO BLACK.

END OF PLAY