

# *...and Another Frankenstein*

**Will Owen**

a global English melodrama

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## Introductory Information

**Concept:** "...and Another Frankenstein" is...yes, another!...representing of that great, Romantic era, Gothic melodrama that has held spellbound both playwrights and audiences since its earliest stage version five years after the publication of the novel's first edition. Indeed, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's *Frankenstein* may well be the most re-made of great melodramas, ever "out performing" its two most perennially popular consort-rivals for re-imaginings of one kind or another, *Bohème* and *The Three Musketeers*. Why? What is it about this novel's four intertwined -- highly melodramatic -- stories that so popularly and persistently fascinates readers and audiences? Well, from a theater-maker's point of view...it's the melodrama: of the Demon's desperate desire for love and his/her rage at its denial, of Victor's crippling remorse for having created such a solitarily monstrous creature, of Justine's calvary wrongly convicted of William's murder, and of (the frame story) Walton's ill-fated quest for fame as an explorer. In this re-enacting, these four plot streams concurrently play out, thanks to the devices of a play-within-the-play and that of making the Demon a scenographic effect and vocal presence rather than a personage enacted onstage the more usual way. In this play then, there is no pale green, most often male, and often cartoonly hideous, horror genre figure; even so, the character of the Demon -- his/her voice intact and beautiful -- is very present throughout the play, as his/her story is being enacted in the play-within-the-play. Also, this play represents this globally well-known story in a theatre-poetry made of standard, global English -- to make for compelling, and popular, contemporary theatre accessible to a wide range of today's daily users of today's global language.

**Production and Casting Requirements:** Except for the scenographic effects-making and live sound-mixing called for for portraying the Demon, this play's production dramaturgy is that of conventional, period-piece costume drama. This play was projected for a traveling troupe of only four actors and two actresses; strictures throughout -- that the actress who plays Elizabeth also voices the Demon, that the crew is ever unseen, etc. -- stem from this originating projection. The Demon is a monstrous, hideous progeny. Only its voice has escaped deformity. The Demon appears -- if at all -- only suddenly and briefly, or in scenes pitched in darkness. It hides, cowed and draped in capes and furs. The horrifying life-form beneath is (again, if at all) only for brief instants glimpsed by the members of the audience. The character of the demon however, is hauntingly, resoundingly present throughout the play; this vocal presence can be an opportunity to put to advantageous use many subtle and striking capabilities of live, sound-mixing/signal-processing technology. The bit part of Waverely can be played by the actor who also plays Victor.

**Scene Breakdown:** The action takes place in two contiguous backgrounds: 1) the captain's cabin and deck above it on a sailing ship stranded in an icefield in the Arctic Ocean, and 2) an adjunct area or "dreamspace", variously adapted for representing action contiguous to that on the ship -- in particular the play-within-the-play that the captain and some crew members may have devised and played, or may have only imagined that they played.

THE FRAME STORY ACTION TAKES PLACE ON A SHIP ON A VOYAGE OF  
DISCOVERY TO THE NORTH POLE IN THE EARLY EIGHTEEN HUNDREDS

## CHARACTERS

THE DEMON *a hideous progeny*

WALTON *a captain and explorer*

MARGARET *his wife*

VICTOR *a scientist*

ELIZABETH *his betrothed*

WINSLOW *a sailing master*

HOPKINS *a young sailor*

WAVERLEY *an old sailor*

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## ***...and Another Frankenstein***



*Background is captain's cabin -- with quarterdeck above -- and the dreamspace/adjunct area beside. Margaret (playing from the adjunct area) is at home reading letters from her husband, Walton, an explorer, who is in the captain's cabin of his ship, iced in, in the Arctic ocean. Waverley, an old sailor, is on watch on the quarterdeck above the cabin.*

**MARGARET** *reading letter in adjunct space as Walton writes and paces in his ship's cabin*

"My most extraordinary and loving wife..."  
Oh how, from a husband far away, it pleases so  
the heart longing to hold him to eye the hand  
his hand inked on this page that in its turns  
and breaks and plunges so bespeaks the fire,  
the drive and fervor of the mind that wrote them --  
and the ambition so insistent on the mind it led him  
to the most distant bleakest reaches where, if the world  
were not a globe those on it might well spill  
beyond its end.

"...here all goes as well it might since no disaster  
has accompanied the commencement -- nay, the near  
accomplishment of my purpose for which  
I've sailed so far," he writes...

**WALTON**

but am now here becalmed  
in gloom so deep were it not suffused with light  
of endless day so pale and grey it would be a darkness  
where there's no seeing what's land, what's sky  
what's frozen sea -- it's all one calm fury  
of dense and silent cold. The sooner shackles  
of craggy ice that vise against this hull break up  
and seethe into the cold and watery sea, the better,  
for we break away and again upon my quest set sail.  
For come whatever searing danger or  
adversity, I'll lead this voyage of  
discovery to its successful end,  
and return to fame and triumph in the eyes of men.

"Oh my Margaret, sweetest bride and greatest blessing,  
if you knew my yearning, for you and all around you.  
I see the house graced in its garden,  
recall the hearth's bright cheer, and all the warmth  
of home, and news of nothing, prattle of aunts  
and children, all suffused in loving parents' light --  
and how I'd hold you, my face buried in  
the perfumes by your neck, standing close and still  
beside the dimming glowing in the grate --  
then lead you to the stairs and love's dark bower..."  
But I am here -- commanding -- this vessel and her crew,  
all in the service of the glory and  
the honors I will yet make mine!  
Mister Winslow! Boy, have Mister Winslow attend to me.

**CABIN BOY** *heard from off*

Sir! Aye aye, sir.

**MARGARET**

"All goes well" he writes "or as well it might"  
beset by storms and stinging accidents  
that many a countryman would make  
a hoary, harrowing tale, but that mariners  
inured to the usury of the angry sea but log,  
laconic and dull, credits of leagues against debits of time  
in their account books of passage over pathless waves.  
And in what logbook of heavy heartedness,  
in what ciphers marking ache and longing can  
a woman's missing of her stalwart husband  
and all the rapture, fire and fervor of  
the strength of truest love be counted  
'gainst her angry passage through abandoned days?

**WALTON**

"My dearest and most beloved wife, since last  
I wrote"...and how may this letter come to you from here  
where there is and will not be another human creature --  
and if this pack ice does not loosen before  
this pole tilts from the sun and swirls us all  
stranded here to slow and lightless death --  
I would not know, but write with all conviction  
that what I write will somehow find its way --  
"my ship and men have stayed our course right well,  
their spirits and our ship still stoutly holding" --  
till now, here, beached in this mist of dim  
and endless, disorienting light, blank as an empty page.  
A strange foreboding fills me here, so still

in this bleak, so windless cold it couldn't cut  
the flame off from a candle yet could so quickly  
cut the life out of a man. ... Aye!

*Winslow comes on after knocking; Margaret goes off from adjunct space.*

**WINSLOW**

You asked to see me, Sir?

**WALTON**

Indeed I did, Mister Winslow. And I thank you. I would have you

**WINSLOW**

Sir, I am glad you did, for I would speak with you

**WALTON**

And I would gladly speak with you, Mister Winslow, but first

**WINSLOW**

Sir, the men

**WALTON**

Aye, the men, Mister Winslow --  
and I would have you make doubly certain  
they hew to each iota of our shipboard practice.  
Full complements must stand ev'ry watch  
as if underway, and all must stand their turn,  
with duties specified -- sectors of horizon set,  
repair and revision of all that may be amiss --  
for idleness in time like this of withering inaction  
will soon sour their spirits and vinegar their courage.

**WINSLOW**

Sir, I know, so I would

**WALTON**

You would speak to me and I would gladly speak with you  
but first, if you please, I'd have my orders met.

**WINSLOW**

Aye, sir. But, sir

**WALTON**

But what? For you would tell me in this icy calm  
their minds do turn to nourishing their fears,  
and dream of turning back and reaching home,  
to be, at last, again, asleep, so warm and soundly safe  
abed beside their faithful Janes or slattern jades?

And no! There'll be no thought of that until is ended,  
crowned with laural glory what we've begun.

**WINSLOW**

To surely see, again, my children and my wife,  
I'd give the failure of this quest. Are you not afraid?

**WALTON**

No. Not yet.

**WINSLOW**

And if this ice that prisons us does not melt?

**WALTON**

It will. It will. It must. We are at height  
of Summer, season here of warmest tides  
and of perpetual day. This must be just  
an aberrant..aberrant..aberrance...  
And it will end and soon we will away,  
my purpose stronger than it was before.

**WINSLOW**

When Winters are remembered for their long  
and bitter cold, or long recalled as mild,  
when Springs bring floods of rain or Summers,  
long draughts that wither kine and fields,  
none should blame aberrance for Nature's blind,  
and killing fury. This ice has been this way for

**WALTON**

I know, Mister Winslow, I know. Oh God, I know.  
And I am telling you it will change...soon.

**WINSLOW**

No luck was ever changed by saying so.  
Sir, I have lived a life at sea, and know  
too well the way that courage and resolve  
of even strongest hearts are swept away,  
made tiny timbers churned in smash of waves --  
mere nothings in the face of Nature's rage.

**WALTON**

And I would gladly speak of that with you,  
to learn, by thinking, on what I may not know.  
But first, if you would, I'd have my orders met.  
I thank you, Mister Winslow. And for now that will be all.

**WINSLOW**

Aye, aye, Sir.

*Winslow goes off; Margaret reappears in adjunct space.*

**WAVERLEY** *on watch on quarterdeck above, overheard by Walton in cabin below*

'Tis near eight bells. And all is far from well.  
This midnight sky is light as day. This is  
not fit for men to live this way. Somehow  
We must away -- break our shacklers so at fault!  
This light portends dark death to fires of hell.

**WALTON**

And I write her all goes well? "My sweetest one,"  
should we survive and turn safely home  
I would spare you worry, and should we not,  
I would you knew of how I did my best  
against the ugly end, and early sensed  
the cancer, slowly reaching like a dark  
and stifling insect infestation -- mutiny! --  
so slowly breeding in th'instersticies  
of dull inaction and despair, so soon  
to spread its thick and wid'ning sway upon  
the hearts and minds of what were once good men.  
And til my end I did my best to keep  
them drawing strong on all that's best in men,  
and face our death as best men can.  
That I breathe -- as I take it in -- another breath  
is certain, but for the next, and next, until which  
will be last in a gathering avalanche  
of accident and misfortune is the uncertainty  
that so fin'lly ends in the certainty of our end?  
"My sweetest, dearest, most beloved bride, here all goes well and..."

**MARGARET**

"All goes well" he writes, but not as well  
as were he here safely back home beside me,  
in deepest love of fam'ly and relations and  
the care and company of his new wife --  
and the admiration and renown that men  
of daring and ambition seek in others' eyes.  
Oh my love, I pray, that yours by shipwreck,  
so mine by heartbreak, both our lives won't end.  
A loving marriage is a joy forever.  
Yet why's it not enough to quell and sate  
the lust for glory, too strong and clever



to live in happiness bound to home and mate?  
The woods beyond the garden where we walked  
are thick with life at cusp of Summer's wane;  
the willow by the stream where we so often talked  
of love and winning of my heart stands swain --  
so emptily bereaved of our long kissings hid  
amid its tendril strands, buddingly leaved.  
In stirring, laughing Spring there we undid  
the locks that lace up hearts and clothes, and weaved  
two bodies into one with Nature's racing course.  
That willow now it trails its lassid tears  
heavy, by a with'ring brook of fading force,  
so ominous a portent of cold fears  
the news of you will turn from desperate to worse --  
and come the Spring I'll walk there so alone  
to swell the stream with the torrent of my tears?

*Hopkins comes on on quarterdeck above; Margaret disappears from adjunct space; Walton, in cabin below, overhears Hopkins and Waverley on quarterdeck above.*

**HOPKINS**

I come relieve you of your watch.

**WAVERLEY**

And welcome too, for there need be no watch  
where there's but icy waste to see -- and from  
a dying ship at that, bestilled and choked with cold.

**HOPKINS**

What? No watch? No, for the lieutenant he clutched my sleeve as we just passed, and fixed me in the eye and said: "watch as intent and lively as if every sail and timber of this ship were groaning free in a stiff'ning wind and ever heavier, heaving swells." And so I will. Give me the glass so I may scan...this strangeness...pressing on us with no weight or sound -- ice field, fog and sky all one, only at instants made out one from the other...and to see what? Here now? But our good captain brave and true he said

**WAVERLEY**

Aye, brave, so more fit to die so uselessly with us all.  
Watch well your useless watch so we'll not see  
under the spell of what your lying captain says  
the slow and bitter end that closes fast on us,  
led here by that reckless man that well we ought...

**HOPKINS**

Ought what, you say?

**WAVERLEY**

Make pay for bringing us to this death this way.  
And with the strongest of the crew betake us then,  
across the ice with boat and supplies in tow  
to reach close open water and make for land --  
and save our lives

**HOPKINS**

It would be mad to leave the ship for this -- even if the captain, he would agree  
to come...

**WAVERLEY**

He'd not be joining, nor the lieutenant neither.

**HOPKINS**

What?

**WAVERLEY**

Aye. Aye. That.

**HOPKINS**

No.

**WAVERLEY**

Why not? If we're to free ourselves. We'll see  
what you think and do when others sound you out.  
But breath a word of this where it does not  
belong, and your sweetladdee neck squeezed shut  
'll ne're a pipe one living breath again.

**HOPKINS**

Avast! Belay your hawser hands from me!

**WAVERLEY**

For now.

**HOPKINS**

You'd dare to kill them, would you?

**WAVERLEY**

With these? Or slipping blade that whetstone sharp  
spitting spears the beating heart? How little do you  
you know how quick, well killed, a man can die.  
Watch lively then your watch. I am off below.

**WALTON**

Aye. Aye. It can so quickly come to that.  
Fear descends so fast all self-control in men,

hurtling them to set upon someone to blame, and then?  
So now to raise you back -- to watch your watch,  
high-minded and stout-hearted, playing your part  
of loyal sailors, cheerful in devotion --  
leaving the somber part of leading lives  
to life or death, to me...worn out -- gripped  
in fear and loneliness like all who wear  
the proud mask of command?

**HOPKINS**

Wait. Wait. I see. I see there...

**WAVERLEY**

What? What's there to see in this pale mist?

**HOPKINS**

Oh, God...oh God, protect us. Ohohoh... It cannot be.

**WAVERLEY**

You dream. The quarter rations we are fed  
have sent your empty stomach to your head.

**HOPKINS**

No! I see... I see it -- scudding dark and swift in the mists and swirl -- up behind  
the blur of dogs that pull the sled -- it seems to slump and sway, and ohohoh...its  
legs folded in front shrouded in furs, and arm-limbs long like tentacles grasp the  
reins, and flies a flag -- no! a mane wild to the wind behind the head... No! the  
wind has torn the hood... Is it a face?...Ohhh... glistening huge like a mangled  
creature's, newly born

**WAVERLEY**

Give me the glass!

**HOPKINS**

Oh strangest living thing that I have seen...

**WAVERLEY**

Where? So I can see. Where you say?

**HOPKINS**

There, abeam. Not far, but for the mists.

**WAVERLEY**

There's nothing there!

**HOPKINS**

What? There was. There was. By God, I saw it. I saw. I know I did. Look there.  
Do you see it?

**WAVERLEY**

No. You dream. There's nothing there.

**HOPKINS**

No. No. No. I saw it there.

**WAVERLEY**

Enough. I am off below.

**HOPKINS**

Wait. Give me back the glass.

**WAVERLEY**

Take it, and look your fill, and in this frozen hell  
you and your false sightings be forever damned.

**HOPKINS**

Oh leave me not so frightened here alone.

**WAVERLEY**

Oh... If frightened so, how will you join us  
in killing them who brought us here to this?

**HOPKINS**

I?

**WAVERLEY**

Now that you know -- only if ignorant  
could you be trusted not to speak, not so?

**HOPKINS**

Not so. ... 'Tis gone. There's nothing I can see. It must be hidden by the mists.  
But we must tell the captain of this we've seen.

**WAVERLEY**

Belay your sorry tale. Oh, tell him if you will  
but ask me not to tell I saw it too.

**HOPKINS**

I'll tell the lieutenant then, but report it, that we must.

*Hopkins and Waverley go off above.*

**WALTON**

There's nothing there. But better they dream?  
Have eerie visions thrall their minds, that then,  
telling the tale, they'll splice a meaning to,  
that sustains their ends -- as malcontent they while  
the empty hours to mutinous intent?

They'll talk of this -- and we'll then splice to it  
the meaning that makes the best of it --  
a harbinger of our success to come!  
There was airy nothing there, and yet I'll make  
of it a stanchion strong to buttress sagging spirits,  
and undermine the foolish desperation  
that would kill me, forsake the ship, and trek  
afoot across the blinding, shifting ice.  
But foolish never held men back from deeds  
of evil or disastrous mistake.

**HOPKINS** *heard from off*  
Mister Winslow, Sir

**WINSLOW** *heard from off*  
Aye?

**HOPKINS** *heard from off*  
Sir, taking the watch, methinks I have a sighting to report.

*Margaret reappears in adjunct space.*

**WALTON**  
"My dearest wife," and did you not once say  
a deep foreboding, evil, swept you  
as on this quest I set on my way  
as at that last embrace I turned and left you?  
I so remember well that fateful day --  
the bunting decks the ship, the expedition  
patrons stiffly shifting as I make my way  
looking at my crew, lined aboard, above the quay  
all their eyes upon me, but yours still seeming to say

**MARGARET** or **WALTON** *or together*  
"So go, and act the part of captain if you must play,  
but spare pretending you're my love if going away."

**WALTON**  
Oh my Margaret, if vouchsafed this ambition  
and I turn safely home to you one day,  
I swear that I'll not risk again perdition  
and hazard happiness for glory's sway.  
But this one time, I would my vindication  
achieve, for all to see as clear as day.  
Aye!

*Winslow comes on after knocking; Margaret disappears from adjunct space.*

**WINSLOW**

Sir, the watch reports the sighting of a fearful thing.

**WALTON**

Indeed?

**WINSLOW**

Sir?

**WALTON**

The watch, Mister Winslow, watches on this deck, just here, above our heads.

**WINSLOW**

Aye Sir.

**WALTON**

Who was it says he saw the sled with the maned and glistening-faced, long-limbed creature on it?

**WINSLOW**

Hopkins, Sir.

**WALTON**

And who was with him who says he didn't?

**WINSLOW**

Waverely, Sir.

**WALTON**

And who is senior need I ask?

**WINSLOW**

The second is an able seaman sir, with many years before the mast.

**WALTON**

Aye, so I thought. And I would far trust Hopkins first for his spirit and his cheer, where Waverely if not kept battened to the challenge of the sea in idleness would make the busiest of mutineers until the busyness of his life was ended dangling from a yard.

**WINSLOW**

Aye, sir; 'tis so. 'Tis so indeed.

*They laugh.*

It is of that, Sir, I would speak to you.  
I fear he has been talking to the men  
of deadly, grim designs, promising

that following him, they would wrest free  
of bleak, slow death here in this icy calm.

**WALTON**

And kill us both to boot to take away its pain --  
abludgeoning us to death like sealpups crushed,  
killed quick as quick forgotten, and on to kill another --  
how long will that assuagement last them then,  
until again, anger overtakes them on their trek,  
completely lost across this field of ice?

*They laugh.*

**WINSLOW**

Shall I move to arrest him, Sir, and those who rally to him?

**WALTON**

We are unsure who they are. And now,  
arrests would make it worse, and further feed  
their rant of blaming you and me, for they'd  
but find in that more salt to rub  
into their wound of circumstances' victim,  
that throbs with dim and smoldering  
resenting, to kindled burn with braise self-pitying.  
And for now we're all under arrest in this...  
No... No, for now until I find a way, we'll let it be.  
It's the same men, after all, who can be led  
to brave heroics or base depravity.

**WINSLOW**

Aye, Sir. But, Sir

**WALTON**

But Hopkins and Waverly was it that did --  
and didn't -- make this sighting by our beam?  
Here the credence to time at sea we'll give.  
There could be nothing there to see, it seems to me.  
What else, Mister Winslow, would be living here in this

**WINSLOW**

But ourselves, Sir -- and for how long, and how?  
Long and slowly from cold starvation  
or tonight and quickly from colder steel  
bristling in the hands of mutineers?

**WALTON**

We will live long enough to see this voyage to its end  
and then, and only then, return to see our homes again.

**WINSLOW**

And if your confident courage, Sir  
blurs your prudence and your reason?

**WALTON**

Others -- you -- pay the price, am I to think?

**WINSLOW**

Sir. And as for this apparition,  
if it is strange that we are here then what is strange  
that there might not be others also venturing here?

**WALTON**

Aye. Aye. But the strange is not the likely, Mister Winslow,  
and on what is likely reason must always rule.

*Rumbling of breaking ice etc. heard faintly, then louder.*

Close your eyes. Close your eyes and breath softly, Mr. Winslow.  
And tell me, tell me reason yet rules my senses  
and what I hear is what I hear!  
Do you hear it, Mister Winslow, do you hear it?

**WINSLOW**

Oh Sir, the cracking of the ice!

**WALTON**

Aye, Mister Winslow, aye! And soon this hull  
will slip its clutching and sway in sea again --  
and I hear the breeze come from the West  
stirring our still rigging and aye! On our way again!  
Have the men spoken of this apparition?

**WINSLOW**

Oh aye, first Waverely, at the changing of the watch,  
to mock young Hopkins, did rant on Hopkin's tale.  
Then Hopkins, fiery angry, to eyes that lined the foc'sle,  
peering, widening from the hammocks, or glinting,  
standing stooped beside the beams, did tell  
his tale of a glistening livid face and head, wild-maned,  
sledding, dark and slumping, through the mists  
not a mile abeam beside us here in this frozen hell.  
And all consensed it is an auger of our death.

**WALTON**

Auger of our success! Listen to the sea change, real, in our ears, Mister  
Winslow, not the fears of our mind's creation. Muster the men, for I would  
speak to them.



**WINSLOW**

Sir?

**WALTON**

Beat the drum to muster, Mister Winslow,  
for I would speak to them, and then I'll  
have them turn this ship on a course set Northwards  
to vouchsafe us our ambition's quest!

**WINSLOW**

Aye, aye, sir! Boy, break out your drum and call the men to muster!

**CABIN BOY** *heard from off*

Sir! Aye aye, sir.

*Winslow goes to quarterdeck above, Walton follows, drum beats, and Walton, on the quarterdeck, addresses the -- unseen -- crew on the -- unseen -- main deck behind the cabin.*

**WALTON**

My hearties, for that you are, and I am proud of you,  
how many here are list'ning to the cracking of the ice?  
Aey?

*sullen murmur heard from crew*

Aey? And I hear the breeze that lifts and soon  
will fill our sails to race us Northwards on our quest,  
should we seek to keep the promise we have made.  
I can hear it better than I can hear you now.  
Aey?

*rising murmur heard from crew*

Aey? You would not go, but would turn away?  
Aey?

*deeper murmur heard from crew*

And how many here have heard the tale  
of the creature seen this watch that passed beside?  
Heard the fright of him who saw it, bent aghast  
to ev'ry feature of its hideous shape?  
The low dark sled, the panting dogs, the form  
slumped in furs behind, the angled limbs,  
the tentacle long arms, the mane, wild  
to the wind, the face, monstrous full,  
and glistening livid as kill newly skinned

in the first bright rays of a hunting day?  
And portending..portending..what?  
Aey? You have all heard of it by now?

*louder murmur heard from crew*

And you..and who?.. would say it portends our end?  
Do you not hear the rub of loosening ice  
against these ribs? And what portended this?  
To your minds what has freed us from its clamp?  
Do you not feel the deck beneath your feet  
swayed to swells that if a ship could sing  
the song would stir to joy the noble heart  
at shiver and groan of timbers strained twixt  
sails and sea, and what heart would not take wing  
at the music of this sweet wind's pluck and whistling  
in this harp of rigging, ropes and stays?  
We can, and soon, be under way, again to dare  
discovery where no man yet has been.  
Aye, who..who of you?..will dare go on with me?

*ragged cheer heard from crew*

Aye, how many here would rather safe at home  
be sleeping in warm beds by sweet wife or sweeter...? Aey?

*tittering heard from crew*

And oh how the kissings from womens' lips --  
above their chins or below their bellies --  
would soothe so sweetly what most ails us all -- Aey?

*guffawing heard from crew*

And safe at home, how many would tell the tale  
to eager neighbors, expectation wide in their eyes,  
of how purpose flagged, courage faded,  
and you had it not within you to press on,  
but ashamed, turned back, afraid, when you  
could yet have conquered what you determined on?  
Who would come home, coward and loser  
forever shunning others' eyes? Yes, who  
would walk triumphant, admired in eyes of all?

*roar heard from crew*

So shall we sail on, high and wide and handsome?  
Aye, so we shall press on, and I am proud of you.

*cheer heard from crew*

**A SAILOR** *heard from off*

Ahoy! Ahoy! A shape! A shape alongside below the bow!

**WINSLOW**

The watch! Something upon us. Some thing is seen!

**WALTON**

Send a party to ascertain.

**WINSLOW**

Avast! Muster belayed. Hands to the forequarter. Lively now! This may be

**WALTON**

This may be what it will be when we will see it.

**A SAILOR** *heard from off*

A man! A man upon a floe of ice! By devil Davy Jones I swear -- near drowned, his sled it trails into the sea, but the dogs... Ahoy!

**VICTOR** *heard weakly, as if alongside the ship, and so through following*  
Aieieieie...

**A SAILOR** *heard from -- unseen -- main deck, and so through following*  
It is a man, Sir, indeed. Alive.

**VICTOR**

Aieieieie...

**WINSLOW**

A line to rescue him if he can use it.

**A SAILOR**

Ahoy! Ahoy! Grasp the lifeline; we will take you aboard.

**VICTOR**

No. No. I would not, cannot, will not, for it still lives. I must kill it and must die. Take my thanks and leave me, leave me on my quest, I beg of you, but I will not die til I have killed it.

**A SAILOR**

He seems too weak, Sir -- and refuses.

**WALTON**

See to the rigging of a chair, Mister Winslow.

**WINSLOW**

There is the churning of the breaking ice, Sir.

How could this come so fast upon us?  
The salt sea eddying between the floes  
would so cold freeze a man before he drowned.

**WALTON**

See to the rigging of a chair, Mister Winslow,  
Take care to take what risk is prudent,  
but take no more than that. For life,  
when saved it can be, to reasonable risk,  
it must be. Would you Sir, sail happy  
on a ship that left the stranded to their death,  
refusing any risk to the safety of its own,  
before reasonable chance of saving others'?

**WINSLOW** *going off from quarterdeck above, to -- unseen -- main deck*  
No, Sir. Aye, aye, Sir. Avast! You and you, break out plank and tackle, and to  
the gun'l -- follow me.

**A SAILOR**

He flails upon the ice, possessed by fury, raging, but too weak to stand!

**WINSLOW** *heard from -- unseen --main deck, and so through following*  
Lively, lively, sure all's ready -- weather eye to where the ice moves! Heave to!  
Hopkins, man the chair and take care to bring him safe aboard.

**HOPKINS** *heard from -- unseen --main deck, and so through following*  
Aye, aye, Sir. Ready, Sir.

**WINSLOW**

Lower, lower, quick and gently. Come along, come along. Weather eye to  
danger! Belay!

**HOPKINS**

And the dog, Sir?

**WINSLOW**

Leave him, get the man aboard.

**HOPKINS**

He will not come, Sir -- refuses -- and as fevered rails at a demon he must kill.

**WINSLOW**

He must for so our captian orders! Lash him to the plank, and betake you to it  
too. Now! There is no time -- the ice it breaks away!

**HOPKINS**

Aye Sir, aye Sir -- almost ready, but he struggles

**WINSLOW**

Make him! Strike him if you must! There is no time!

**HOPKINS**

Aye Sir, aye Sir -- ready, now! What of the dog, Sir? He lives too.

**WINSLOW**

Damn the dog! Ready, ready -- heave, heave ho! Ha-ee-aie santyanna! Heave! Steady, steady, and now aboard.

**WALTON** *to himself*

Heave, my hearties heave -- and well done too, for he is safe aboard.

**WINSLOW**

He is aboard, Sir.

**WALTON**

Bring him to my cabin. Lively! And then to quarters to set sail!

**WINSLOW**

All hands, all hands to quarters. Now. You heard our captain. Ready to make way as soon we can. Hopkins, take his feet; we'll take him.

*Shouts and running of sailors -- Walton leaves the quarterdeck above and descends into cabin below, as Hopkins and Winslow come on to quarterdeck carrying Victor. Following Walton, Winslow descends first into captain's cabin, and as they do so, The Demon appears on the quarterdeck, seen only by Hopkins, who screams with terror, lets go of Victor, and tries to scramble away. The Demon attacks Hopkins, holding him as if to stifle him.*

**WALTON** *as Victor tumbles to the cabin floor with Winslow trying to carry him*

What!?! With care Mister Winslow!

**WINSLOW** *shouting up at Hopkins whom he no longer sees*  
Hopkins! Damn you, Hopkins! What devil has possessed you?

**VICTOR**

No...No...No...I must go on until my quest is finished. If I can no longer hope to kill it, then I would no longer live. I must undo what I have done.

**WALTON**

Calm, calm, calm yourself. You are safe now.

**VICTOR**

No, no... You must understand, but cannot, cannot.. I have made a monstrous thing, and it still lives! I have so failed, I have so failed, so let me go...

**WALTON**

*to Victor* Please, my friend. You are safe with us now. *to Winslow* He is delirious, gone. Hold him down, til we can put him in the bunk.

**WINSLOW** *struggling with Victor in cabin below, as Hopkins struggles with The Demon on quarterdeck above*

My God, for one so frail -- help me -- but such strength in throes of fury... Oh!

**VICTOR** *struggling, then fainting from exhaustion*

No, no, I must go, go on, until I've killed the life I made, that killed all living that made life worth to me. No.... It lives and taunts me still! I know it lives!  
No!

**WINSLOW**

He seems he was once a man of lively mind and learned means, but so wan and broken now -- as cold and hardship beyond endurance, would do to me, or you.

**WALTON**

Indeed he does, Mister Winslow -- and indeed it could.

**THE DEMON** *attacking and holding Hopkins, on quarterdeck above, simultaneously with exchange in cabin below*

Silence. Dare to breathe, but dare not speak.

What you see in seeing me, my human one, you have not seen. You speak of me on this ship, and quickly, quickly I will find and kill you.

I come not for you. So silence, silence, lest you lose your life stifling in my grasp.

You struggle? My embrace displeases? What?

My smell? My touch upon your skin? My voice as I whisper to your mind tweezed there

'tween your unmangled petal-lovely ears?

Within, your self curdles seeing my flesh glistening like naked pain? You faint with fear?

And if I moved these limbs that hold you so then your mouth might taste my lips?

Oh if you knew, my human one, the hurt in me of how you sense so wrongly who

I am. You struggle? Squirming like a mouse wrapped and dragged up as the hawkwings climb?

Go limp with lethal calm, accept, accept that these claws now will not let go.

Oh if you knew, my human one, the hatred in me of how always you and yours deny your recognizing me for all I am!

To slake that fury I should kill you now.

Yes, oh yes, beg me, beg me pity you with your lovely, desperate, human eyes.

But I came not for you. Leave me. Leave me, now!  
And I will hide me on this ship where none  
can ever find me -- and oh if you speak of me,  
my little human one, I will, I will  
so quickly find and quickly kill you.

*The Demon throws Hopkins aside and disappears into hiding.*

**HOPKINS** *in shock, staggering into cabin*  
Oh, God, oh God, I have been siezed and...by...oh, I... Captain...

**WALTON**  
Hopkins? You are Hopkins, are you not?

**HOPKINS**  
I... Ahahieie..

**WINSLOW**  
"Sir," Hopkins. It is the captain you address.

**WALTON**  
Pull yourself together, man. You just did well, very well indeed, in saving our  
new guest. And you have reason to be proud of that.

**WINSLOW**  
Except for tripping at the hatch! What befell you of a sudden?

**HOPKINS**  
Sir..Oh, Sir...

**WALTON**  
There. You will be right when on deck and back at work again. As will we all.  
Mister Winslow, as soon the parting of the ice allows, set a course for  
Northwards. Double watches on the bow, making all deliberate speed that  
conditions will allow.

**WINSLOW** *going to quarterdeck above*  
Aye aye, Sir. At stations, now hear this. Man the halyards, make ready to set  
sail!

**A SAILOR** *heard from main deck*  
Sir, the ice is thickening again, so fast. The wind has fallen.

**WINSLOW** *on quarterdeck above, heard in cabin below*  
Damn, damn, damn -- it closes in on us again!

**WALTON** *to himself*  
Oh no, be merciful, and not that again...and  
distract me from the truth that I may just pretend I can delay I know. Oh...

**HOPKINS**

Sir... Oh, Sir, I am torn with fear.

**WALTON**

Fear not -- all ice that freezes hard as stone  
at heart is soft as water running free.  
Look here, the skins he wears are wet --  
now help me -- to the bunk with him -- he is  
it seems, but fainted.

*Walton and Hopkins carry Victor to bunk.*

Take off his furs and sledding boots, and cover him with warming blankets, and  
fetch a draught from the cook and galley. It will revive him, for he is alive -- as  
our hopes must also be. Go.

**HOPKINS** *going off, as Winslow re-enters cabin*  
Aye, aye, Sir.

**WINSLOW**

Sir, the wind has died. The cold has risen -- and so strangely quick. The ice  
rushes in around us a clamp of iron. I have never seen such angry changing in  
conditions -- something vast has gone amiss in Nature here, and I despair.

**WALTON**

Aye. Aye, Mister Winslow, I know.

**WINSLOW**

What shall we do, Sir? How will this end?

**WALTON**

I know not. Mister Winslow -- nor do you, nor all of us.  
I know... I know the taste of these bitter cinders  
that blanket up my heart, so dull yet stinging,  
in eerie silence once the fire of battle lost is gone.  
Then nothing stirs within that might give rise to hope,  
and all the valor and the pitch of the attack  
is but an empty echo, crushing quiet,  
still, as the strewn, limp and crumpled newly slain  
are carcass hollows of the life they had.  
I feel as if an orchestra surging at full-throated play  
was wrenched by violence to discordant stop.

**WINSLOW**

Are you afraid?

**WALTON**

I am. And we shall be afraid together.



Now, when so much harder than we ever thought  
that it could be, is when men learn to lead.  
And of our fear, none on this ship must know.

**WINSLOW**

I understand, and will do my best.

**WALTON**

And Winslow, mutiny's contagion will again,  
when hopelessness becomes too hard to bear,  
cloud their minds with angry desperation --  
more likely now, so soon enough they'll come.  
So on our guard for that we'll start, and now.  
For those who plan for worst events  
are likeliest to have the luck to miss them.

**WINSLOW**

Aye, Sir. I await your orders, Sir.

**WALTON**

Go to the men, Winslow, stand them down from quarters,  
and speak to each of them, of nothing, just  
kind words that speak of trust in them.  
Order skeleton watches on the deck,  
one ration of grog for all, and a double watches' sleep,  
before or after duty, for all hands. And by then  
this Earth will swing around once more, and bring  
the sun from where it skids by the pale horizon here  
to the center of the sky, and we will say  
it is tomorrow, and we live to fight another day.

**WINSLOW** *going off, meeting Hopkins who comes on*  
Aye, aye Sir.

**HOPKINS**

I have the draught, Sir.

**WINSLOW**

Good, Hopkins -- then take it to the captain, will you? Thank you. Thank you,  
Mister Hopkins.

**HOPKINS**

Sir? Aye aye, Sir.

**WALTON** *as Hopkins comes into cabin after knocking*  
Aye. Hopkins, I see you have the draught.

**HOPKINS**

Aye, Sir.

**WALTON**

We'll not be needing it. He seems asleep,  
if fitfully so, so why wake him now?  
Oh, put it there -- in this becalment there's no danger  
from any yaw or heeling it might spill.

**HOPKINS**

Aye, aye Sir. ... Sir, is he dead?

**WALTON**

No, I think not.

**HOPKINS**

And Sir...Sir, did he speak, Sir?

**WALTON** *laughing*

Of a creature, a demon to be killed? Glistening-faced, wild-maned and  
monstrous, like the one you too have seen?

**HOPKINS**

Sir...Oh, Sir, I have seen no such thing.

**WALTON**

I thought not.

**HOPKINS**

Oh, Sir... Sir... But he? Has he? I fear I heard him say

**WALTON**

Fear not, I say. You too would see demons  
after the wrack of cold exhaustion he has seen.  
Tomorrow when he wakes, let us sustain  
the hope that he can tell us of what destiny  
did bring him here so strangely to cross paths --  
with yours who saved him as his was near its end.

**HOPKINS**

And ours, Sir, is it to end? Here too?

**WALTON** *laughing*

Ours too we will sustain, and take that up  
tomorrow, fearing not -- short as your life  
may be, it's still the longest thing you'll live.  
Batten the ports, Hopkins, for we all need sleep --  
if for no better reason, then to spite

this endless day of unendingly bad luck.  
Aye.

*Hopkins closes the cabin's portholes; it darkens, as Winslow comes on, after knocking.*

**WINSLOW**

Sir, all is secure. As well she can this ship  
now sleeps in her cold, hard bed tonight --  
though still there is no telling what dread actions

**WALTON**

of furious betrayal and violent unrest  
might yet pry her from her restoring sleep?

**WINSLOW**

Aye, Sir. That.

**WALTON**

Well then? Well done. But if you would stay Winslow  
to share my watch over our fevered guest,  
then take that chair and take some rest,  
in case he wakes, insurgent with such fury that  
we must by force, all restrain him for his good?  
These pistols -- to while away the time --  
need oiling and care, while I, this cutlass can afine --  
to while away the time -- and log a few  
new lines on this encounter unexpected,  
and damned reversal of our hopes.  
So luck's most constant in inconstance, so  
fast it changes, from bad to good, and back.

**WINSLOW**

I will, here in this chair I'll place beside  
the hatch that leads into the cabin --  
in case he wakes and raves again and bolts.

**WALTON**

Yes. In case he does.

**WINSLOW**

I feel the unfamiliar darkness here  
does balm the rasping on my eyes and soul  
from insistent day and thrilling expectation  
of getting back to action, now so cruelly dashed.

**HOPKINS** *speaking of Victor, asleep in bunk*

If, Sir, I might stay...in case he wakes and speaks...and madly raves, I might

help, please Sir...

**WINSLOW**

Hopkins, it seems to me your place

**WALTON** *laughing*

May better be with us and not his mates?  
Wrap yourself in our guest's sledding furs  
and stretch out to guard beside his bed --  
if he should wake and rail, he'll wake you first  
stepping on you to stand up.

**WINSLOW**

But Sir, what if... *Walton dismisses objection with gesture.* Aye, Sir. ...  
Goodnight, Sir, and may we rest

**WALTON**

in peace. Not yet, not yet, I trust.

**HOPKINS**

And oh ... Thank you ... I will from here be first to sieze what may

**WINSLOW**

may wake? And wake us from our sleep? Aye.

**WALTON**

Aye. Goodnight. And may nothing wake us from our sleep.

*Deep dark in cabin as Victor, Winslow and Hopkins sleep, and Walton writes by  
candlight, as Margaret reappears in adjunct space.*

**WALTON**

My dearest, beloved, extraordinary bride,  
if dare you think of me as I of you,  
a prow to swelling sea surging inside,  
it's best words blush at saying what I would do.  
My longing fits within me I know not how;  
its vastness in this little self that's me --  
as closing these my eyes I see you now --  
outbounds the mighty reach of sky and sea.  
Two lovers twixt to one, specks twixt in an enlace,  
so small as hull twixt to sails, twixt stars and ocean's face,  
are far out-towered by reach of Nature's place,  
as I'd be lost in love in your embrace.  
The resounding spell of Nature's majesty  
sings of your great and distant love to me.

## **MARGARET**

My dearest husband, oh so far away  
care you to think of me as I of you?  
Bright sun that lights this side of Earth at day,  
why have you left me, spun to face the night's dread hue?  
My longing fits within me I know not how;  
its vastness in this little self am I --  
as closing these my eyes I see you now --  
outbounds the mighty dark of starlit sky.  
Two lovers twixt to one, specks twixt in an enlance,  
so great as sun twixt to Earth, twixt stars and heaven's face,  
can as far out-tower the reach of Nature's place,  
as we'd be lost in our love's embrace.  
The resounding spell of Nature's harmony  
sings of our child, you've left to live in me.

*Margaret goes off, disappearing from adjunct space as Walton falls asleep over his papers and cutlass as the Demon appears in cabin's darkness barely seen.*

## **THE DEMON**

Sleep, sleep, sweet sleep -- one more deep innocence  
my wretched and inhuman life denied me.  
In every instant that I have lived  
there's been a restless toss and turn within,  
as what I feel I should be, I can't forget I'm not.  
Since none let me forget the hideous I seem,  
I've learned so well the art of hiding me --  
so still, in any nook or shadow I can fit  
yet still be there a monstrous secret  
like an appearing from so deep in dreams.

*to Winslow, Walton and then Hopkins*

The blindness of cold fury that I feel  
would stifle up your rasping snores so quick  
so I could feel you dying, and slake my rage.  
Your heave and stink and full-grown forms asleep  
are like the hulks of beasts, so far from when,  
awake, you stride in life like Gods on earth  
acting in your prime so certain of your selves.  
How far you are now from what made you that way.  
Asleep, do you return to arms where first you slept?  
So warm and safely nestling at your mother's breast?  
You were so small; you were not born full-grown.  
And how she must have loved you, Oh!  
Her own! Your tiny limbs so startled at  
some sudden sound, and then the music of her voice

so soft and lulling, so sweetly swaying you --  
to quick return to deepest sleep away  
from rude arousal to the fear and anger of survival.  
I, who almost never sleep, and have  
at best known only anxious fears  
and blinding angers, can only dream  
of what the sleep of love must be.  
Were any of you human ones disposed  
to see past what I seem and feel the pain,  
the agony, of me alone teaching myself to make  
some sense of your relations and the world,  
then even you, my so valiant captain,  
would sorely weep sharing in my woe.  
I educated me all on my own.  
And now that I have done what not a God  
could do, then I... Oh, I... I...  
would still have once been loved,  
and would once love before I die.  
And how she must have loved you, Oh! To her  
in infancy's brief moment as beautiful  
to hold and see, as now in youth's brief instant,  
lovely, and I trust silent about me?  
And oh you did, breathing the richness of her smells  
and suckling at the nipple glistening at her breast,  
lull to the wondrous rapture of her songs  
that stirred your heart to love, and then she taught  
you words, that gave you names for what you felt  
and who she was, and who the other was,  
and who were you.

*to Victor*

And I, was left by you to learn alone,  
and live, enraged, in a constant storm  
of sharp sensation, blurred and mad.  
You dreamed of me, and dream you of me now?  
Heave with worried restless rest -- you should,  
you who made me out of lifeless nothing,  
and gave me life, defying laws of prudence,  
so overweening, not leaving to God what's God's  
nor staying in bounds of what's humankind's...that's yours.  
Here is the notebook that you kept when you  
were making me, that I have brought for you.  
As human ones might keep their family history,  
so I have kept and treasured this, have studied it,  
to know what memory is mine, but there is none.  
Me. Me? And what can I be if there is

no other like me to recognize its own kind?  
I brought it here to slip under your pillow on  
your life's last night of breast-milk sleep  
so it reminds all of your crime in giving life to me.  
This book I have carried since I ran away from you --  
since you, more truth to tell, abandoned me --  
a living, foundling thing, for without any,  
not any, any others of its kind.  
And since you have refused the solemn vow  
you made to me to make another I  
might have and hold, I'm here to bring you now  
to fateful, most deserved, unhappy end.  
What kind of life am I and what's worth life to me  
to live so achingly alone, completely free  
to kill you all so freely now?  
Here is the notebook that you kept when you  
were making me, that I have brought for you.  
As human ones might keep their fam'ly's hist'ry,  
so I have kept and treasured this, have studied it,  
regarding it, intent in every way,  
as if a prism it might refract some light  
deep from the darkness of your mind that is  
my only past. The hideous progeny I am, is yours.  
And now to darkness both our lives shall pass.

*The Demon starts to strangle Victor, but wakes Hopkins as he does so, who screams as Victor struggles with The Demon, which wakes Walton and Winslow, as The Demon hurls Victor out of the bunk and flees, disappearing into the shadows. Walton and Winslow, fearing mutineers behind the cabin door, ignore, at first, Victor and Hopkins.*

**WINSLOW**

Are they come?

**WALTON**

I know not. The hatch is latched behind?

**WINSLOW**

No.

**WALTON**

Then invite them in.

**WINSLOW**

Aye. For these doors would hardly keep your hearties out.

**WALTON**

Carefully then -- but better the cutlass sheathed

and by my side, and you stand here to meet them  
by the table but with the pistols near at hand.  
They may come to speak with us, not to attack.

**WINSLOW**

At this time of daynight without end?

**WALTON**

Well we should meet them...in the way they come.

*to Victor and Hopkins*

Silence! Quit your frightened prattle!  
And next you speak when I shall give you leave.

**WINSLOW** *opening cabin door*

No one is there. All is so coldly quiet.  
The cabin boy huddles in his sleep.  
Shall I call the watch Sir, and ask for a report?

*simultaneously with just above*

**HOPKINS**

Arghohrghrgh!

**VICTOR**

Erhrhfh! It clawed my throat, oh! It lives and here.  
Where are you? Where are you that I...

**HOPKINS**

You saw it? You saw it? Oh, what is this thing?

**VICTOR**

The demon I have made. It is alive  
and come for me. God give me all my strength  
that I may grapple with it now, and end  
with vengeance life that cursed my own.  
Help me find now where it hides.

**HOPKINS**

No! I would not know, for I saw no  
such thing that wakened me. No, it never did!

**VICTOR**

Oh, you saw it then, mantled dark, but then beneath

**HOPKINS**

No! No! No!



**VICTOR**

You did! The living flesh so wretchedly alive  
but beneath yet speaking with that voice.  
You saw it, you did.

**HOPKINS** *overcome with fear*

No. Ohohohoh....

**VICTOR**

Here on this ship, at last the time has come.  
Wherever you are hid, stay and end this with me now!

**WALTON** *to Winslow*

No. No. They did not come.  
And yet our fears made us fear they did.  
And was it prudence or runaway imagining  
that brought us to our feet, our weapons in our hands?

*to Victor and Hopkins*

And what are you complaining of?

**VICTOR**

Did you not see it?

**WALTON**

See what? Did someone approach us while we slept?

**WINSLOW**

I saw no one there when they awoke -- so suddenly.  
A dream it must have been, of those the young,  
as when still children, startle wildly up  
from sleep, but soon by loving arms consoled  
return untroubled to their rest.  
Was it not that that troubled so your sleep?

**HOPKINS** *overcome with fear*

Oh Sir, oh Sir, ohohohoh....

**VICTOR**

No! Did you not see it?

**WALTON**

See what?

**VICTOR**

The demon -- evil creature I have made  
that killed near all who ever loved me,

and now will make your ship a shambles  
equal to the horror of its monstrous self.

**WALTON**

My friend, I'm glad to see you have regained your strength, if not your senses.

**VICTOR**

What? You don't believe me? And you? Look at me.  
I owe to you and to your crew my life --  
worth nothing to me save to bring to death  
the demon that at last here with your help  
I may bring down, and end my sad travail on earth.

**HOPKINS** *overcome with fear*

Oh Sir, oh Sir, ohohohoh....

**WALTON**

There is no demon creature. Not on this ship,  
not on this shelf of ice, nor on this world it sits atop.

*then to himself, but overheard by Winslow*

where clutched, a speck in its expanse  
this ship and all us on it may well find  
a slow and with'ring starving death  
if this ice does not melt and let us go.

**WINSLOW**

What Sir?

**WALTON**

What you heard, Mister Winslow, what you heard.

**VICTOR**

Captain, you must listen to me and understand.  
I am a scholar, a man of mind and reason.  
You must believe me. Yes, it is strange even to me  
that I succeeded, but I did -- and curse  
my own ambition now -- in undertaking the creation  
of a form of life that was intended human.  
And now it is here, hiding, and I beg your help  
to find and kill it. You look at me as if I rave.  
How think you I came here to cross the path  
of your ship lost in this vast desolation where  
no one would think another soul might venture  
unless a destiny

**WALTON**

Aye, a destiny indeed. How you came to cross  
our path -- and here -- that must be a tale to tell,  
and we would hear it with much curiosity --  
and here we may well have the time as we  
pass the time waiting to satisfy  
that final, rending, curiosity --  
but not yet, not now, for I still have a ship to run  
and crew to care for in their dangerous despair.  
Hopkins

**WINSLOW**

Hopkins!

**HOPKINS**

Uhuhuh....

**WINSLOW**

Shake yourself alive, man. This is not like you.

**WALTON**

Unbatten all the ports, and let in the light  
of this pale endless hell, and we shall call it day --  
and fill it full of purpose to its very end.  
Mister Winslow, once the men have had their rest

**VICTOR**

Captain, captain, listen to me. Look at  
my body, see the withered battering  
it bears that were it not for fury of the will  
I'd be a sagging heap of jutting bones  
crumpled here in an integument of skin,  
and think upon the hardship it endured  
to reach this place in chase of it that's here

**WALTON**

My friend, we have had the great good fortune  
to save you from the ice and sea -- and thanks  
to this brave sailor who risked himself for you --  
and we will gladly harbor you and have  
you share, equally, with all the honor of  
a welcome guest whatever trial and darkening end --  
or trial and hewed-to-worked-for triumph in the end

*interrupts himself*

Mister Winslow, once the men have had their rest  
divide them into watch parties anew, assign

to each group of them a system of the ship --  
the rigging and the sails, the masts and stays,  
the decks and boats, hull and holds, and all the rest,  
and put them unhurriedly, so joyfully to work,  
together, with songs, to bind their hearts in trust

**VICTOR**

Captain, captain, it is here -- you must listen to me, oh!

**WALTON**

Sir, you are our guest and I would honor you,  
a stranger strangely here among us, as best  
we can, and so would not speak to you as I  
a bumbling sailor might caution for his fault.  
As I was saying Mister Winslow

**WINSLOW**

Aye Sir.

**WALTON**

put them to work with our new purpose now --  
outlast bestilled enivement by this monstrous ice --  
so we must find for crew and ship a habit that befits...  
more that of an encampment than ship at sea...  
put them to work through long and measured days,  
the deck and fire watches cut to few at night.  
Through many days have each group take  
as system of the vessel as their own  
and every last thread and splinter of her  
aye! kissed with loving care -- assayed, repaired  
and put to test until this ship achieves  
the best perfection that she can.

**WINSLOW**

And as they do can gather everything  
that burns and is not needed for the sailing  
of this ship to complement our store,  
copious still, yet dwindling, of coal  
that is all that keeps this cold at bay.

**WALTON**

Aye. That too.  
Put them to work, unhurriedly, so joyfully  
together, singing songs, to bind them into one --  
and turns at work that long enough  
to concentrate and tire are not yet so long  
as to kindle anger and resistance to the task  
and so the tasks can seem like play -- and so they are.

And let the watches see each other,  
so that the pride men take in any group  
that sets them off from others, spurs them on  
to vy, in excellence, or just in rivalry.  
And the rests from turns at work will be

*simultaneously with just above, then interrupting Walton*

**VICTOR** to Hopkins

You saw it. You did. So you must tell him.  
Why will you not speak? It woke you as it held me.

**HOPKINS**

Oh Sir, Ohhh... I must to my duties Sir, and I saw no such thing.

**VICTOR**

You did! And this now is too grave to lie.  
It will stay here, hiding, the more to taunt me,  
but together with you, captain and crew,  
I can kill it at long last hard though it will be.  
So you must tell him so he knows.

**HOPKINS**

No, no... Sir, oh, Sir I saw no such thing.

**VICTOR**

You lie! And lie to me as you please  
but to your captain you cannot, because  
to him loyalty's a duty that you owe!

*interrupting Walton*

Captain, look at me again I beg,  
and if the hardship I have borne, clear,  
on my face and form you see, then clearly,  
imagine, a thousand fold, the suffering within  
of one whose truest friend and dearest wife  
and all, all he held in dearest love were killed  
by a monstrous thing of wild unreason  
that he himself to life did bring.  
Their pain may make men wildly mad,  
but also makes them clear, cold-eyed.  
The demon I have made is here, as real  
as my hand here by your eyes, as he

*indicating Hopkins*

who saw it too can tell you -- tell him!

*Hopkins remains silent.*

**WALTON**

What is clear Sir, is you are really mad as a hatter.

**VICTOR**

No! Ohohoh...

*Victor turns away to collect himself to try again; going to the bunk, he finds the notebook.*

**WALTON**

The rests from turns at work will be -- not short,  
but not long either -- and at same time for all  
so there is time for fellowship, and ease --  
but not so long there's time for lassitude --  
so they can drink, and share the draughts of melted ice  
that may in time be all that may remain  
for us to share. You and I Winslow,  
with cook and steward will again assay  
our stores of food and supply of coal.  
The keys to them will from now on be only ours,  
and you and I we shall preside at every day's  
withdrawal of what will be apportioned.  
Telltale ties will seal the stores at every other time.  
Oh! and each work day each group in turn  
will go upon the ice, axe holes in it and fish.  
We shall make of this adversity  
the best we can for all; we shall provide  
intelligent purpose with planful command,  
til we no longer can or til this ice it melts,  
at last setting us free and then...and then, we'll see...

**WINSLOW**

Aye, aye. I can do it, Sir. But day after day til when?  
The men are not, not learned nor seized  
by high ambition, and so for them day's work  
is not its own reward and will not,  
in and of itself, suffice forever.  
They must have a respite, something near to look to,  
a sure reward for their acceptance of  
the stretch of working time, that marks its end,  
and wins their acceptance to begin again.

**WALTON**

I understand, but there are no holidays  
from the dire work of survival.

**VICTOR**

Captain, captain, my heart and hands they tremble  
at the holding of this book. If you do not believe me,  
then tell me how did this book come here?

**WINSLOW**

Our mad guest again.

**WALTON**

Aye.

**VICTOR**

I tell you it could not have come except  
the Demon brought it! And to taunt me more!  
This is the notebook that I kept in Ingolstadt,  
a student there when I was young -- yet it was not  
so many years ago -- in it I see again  
my thirst for hidden lore and pellmell drive  
to make anew from nothing what all that live  
in this bounteous house of God's creation  
do so equally, blessedly share,  
and I, oh I for that ambition made  
my life a noble house in ruins --  
all murd'rous desolation and senseless death.

**WINSLOW**

And so the more to be pitied by us both.  
My dear good Sir, look at the ample furs,  
and boots and cape you wore when pulled --  
by Hopkins here -- from floes of ice readying  
to smash and tip you down into the sea --  
you do recall your rescue by this man?

**VICTOR** *to Hopkins*

Was it you that did this for me?  
I thank you more than words can say.

**WALTON**

And in their pockets and their folds is ample room  
for instruments and notebooks to navigate and log

**VICTOR**

That's why it's dry and fresh and newly pressed  
as something treasured, lovingly kept,  
not something trailed in packs and pockets  
worn and wracked by headlong months  
of desperate travel across the Earth? No!  
And if it was you who rescued me then I

would everything I have, what will be left  
of my father's lands, I'll gladly leave to you  
for I have no more use for any thing on Earth,  
but help me once more I beg of you and speak!  
Tell them of what you saw that came to kill  
us in our sleep! For we must search this ship,  
and kill it! I beg you. I beg you. I beg you.

*Hopkins remains silent.*

**WALTON**

Hopkins, wake the cabin boy and have him rouse the cook and bring us  
breakfast -- no, let the boy sleep -- you rouse the cook, and have him make a  
ration of coffee like mine and the lieutenant's for our guest -- and one for you  
Hopkins -- and have him make it strong and thick however small as our quarter  
rations will allow.

*Hopkins starts to go.*

**WINSLOW**

Aye, aye Sir! Thank you Sir!

**HOPKINS** *goes off*

Aye, aye Sir. Thank you Sir.

**VICTOR**

Why won't he speak? I know he saw it.  
I swear I have not seen this book since my  
so fateful student days. And you are blind  
to how it must have come here and to how  
the Demon, here, alive, somewhere beside us  
will ruin the happiness of your ship. ... Ohohoh...

**WALTON** *to Winslow*

There is demon on this ship and it is that of mutiny.  
And it will ruin, indeed, its happiness,  
and all the justice and the order of its society.  
And so our plan of giving them a purpose despite  
the tenuousness of hope must work, and well!

**WINSLOW**

I understand, but would it not be best  
to also give

**WALTON** *laughing*

They can pray, Winslow, pray alone or together --  
that too is needed to bear our consciousness.  
Or Winslow, break out that guitar you keep,



and we can give them songs and music that,  
like plays and poetry, loosely ribbon  
ties of trust and common feeling, lovely,  
among all them that take part there together --  
and bestir the mind to self-command and wisdom,  
away from the fear and anger of survival. ... Did you say that to me?

**WINSLOW**

What, Sir? ... You seem perplexed, Sir? ...  
Shall I begin to put in place your orders, Sir,  
wake the cabin boy and call the men to muster?

**WALTON**

No, not yet. Let them sleep, let them sleep their fill,  
forget that they are here and dream they are again  
at home, in safety and at peace, with loves  
they wish they'd known to never leave.  
Is it not so also for you Mister Winslow?

**WINSLOW**

Indeed it is, Sir. ... Aye!

*Hopkins comes on with coffee after knocking.*

**HOPKINS**

Sir, I have

**WALTON**

Bring it here so we can drink it.

**VICTOR** *to Hopkins*

You! You must! You know what you have seen!

**WALTON**

Sir! Belay your demon tale awhile I beg,  
and share with us this cup of dark elixir  
that for an instant blots all cares away.

**VICTOR**

You think some dram from black roasted seeds  
can wash away the desert of my cares --  
as with a mop you might dry up the sea?  
The loss I've known is constant on my mind --  
the sky remains, no matter what the weather.  
The Demon's death, and also mine is all  
can reconcile my life to my life's pain.

**WINSLOW**

It's said the pain of those stark mad who dream  
their sorrows, cuts more sharp and deep than that  
of ours, the sane, who learn how to forget  
the facts of loss that for a time make life  
more cruel than our hearts and minds can bear.

**WALTON**

And I believe it. Tell us then, as now  
we pause our work with this most bittersweet  
and aromatic drink, tell us your tale  
for we would hear it, for it indeed seems strange.

**VICTOR**

You will rue your laugh and mocking of my truth.

**WALTON**

Sir, I do not believe you, but I do not mock you.  
And now I have the leisure, and I would gladly, humbly listen.

**VICTOR**

Most immediately I come from months,  
months of travel beyond endurance in pursuit  
of it, so monstrous, that now is on your ship  
and you, a fool, will not believe it.

**WINSLOW**

Sir, you insult your host, and were you not mad

**VICTOR**

and I humbly, truly beg your pardon then.  
But I am not mad. And no offense was meant  
for truth cannot offend

**WALTON**

those who would strip off  
the hide of lies men tell themselves to clothe  
their mind and senses from the bitter cold  
of naked wisdom of our human lot?

**VICTOR**

Captain, if words were wisdom, ev'ry  
speaker would be wise. Here, in our human lot,  
no matter what their speaking claims, the last  
thing that men want is truth.

**WALTON** *laughing*

So why burden them with it, aey?

**VICTOR**

And you, a fool, are like them.

**WINSLOW**

Sir!

**WALTON** *laughing*

And were I not a fool, then I would choose  
to be offended by such truths as yours?  
And so this demon that you see,  
what does it look like, and how did it come to be?

**VICTOR**

In this notebook that it chills my heart to read  
on every page I can relive another step  
of the fateful course I took to make it live --  
and from nothing but the wastes of charnel houses  
and the ruins of whore's wombs -- until I,  
from ancient lore and deepest science --  
becoming less a man than a haunted beast  
possessed by an Olympian fire and driven  
like some shrill fury on a pride-gorged quest  
did somehow unlock and prompt to action  
the chemistry whence stems the spark of life.  
And what I made I saw it thrived and grew --  
and my heart burned with joy, joy with tears  
like flames might shine upon my face,  
that I myself had a God become!  
Those days I watched my creature grow  
oh ever larger, slowly stirring, and those nights  
I slept the deepest sleep of high ambition slaked.  
Like men who strive to rule, and at last achieve  
the highest office, sleep so well on those first nights --  
like infants sated after feeding at their mother's breast --  
until wakened by the prow of hungry rivals  
who would now take their power in their place.  
And yet it grew, and grew -- but not at all  
human and like me as I had dreamed --  
yet so alive a thing of hideous bones and flesh.  
It seemed in days it was full grown and then  
began to speak in sweetest, wordless burblings.  
And listening, I looked at the cacophony  
of glistening organs twisting through its skin,  
but thrilled to who it was speaking to me,  
and at the horror of the clash that I had made,  
I closed my eyes, I turned my face, and ran away.

**HOPKINS** *to himself*

I think I understand, now all too well.  
And if I speak of it, what then? I die?

**WINSLOW**

Your story, Sir, draws my breaths shorter  
quicken my pulse, and sends a chill of fear  
bristling up along my back -- oh, if true,  
why I near lost myself and did neigh forget

**WALTON**

the fright of slow death in a silent field of ice?

**WINSLOW**

Aye. That too.

**WALTON**

So Hopkins, put more coals into the stove.  
And where was this sweet-voiced demon by you  
brought to such frightening life? And what became of it?

**VICTOR**

In my student rooms at Ingolstadt --  
oh, such an ordinary place for such  
a lasting horror -- but so it always is --  
like student rooms, run down and cramped, unkept  
and furnished with such cheap carelessness,  
yet remembered after, though not noticed then,  
there where we took first fateful actions on our own  
like toddling grown-ups taking first steps  
away from home. ... Oh, home... Oh, then my tragedies began.  
It killed my brother William, just a boy  
happening upon him in a wood, in fury at the sound  
of just my fam'ly's name, and taking a locket from  
his breast it happened on Justine asleep,  
after her search for him, and left the locket in her hand  
so all believed that she had killed the boy.  
And I kept silent and let the law wrongly take her life.  
And then it killed the truest friend that any man  
has ever had the luck to have.

**WINSLOW**

I know not how we can console him.  
If mad, he dreamt the deaths of those  
whose names he speaks with soft regret  
and deeper bitterness.

**WALTON**

Aye. But did you not say the sorrow of  
the mad it pains as much as that of those  
said fully in their senses and completely well?  
A part of that I understand. I too  
have wept, surprised by tears, for friends  
and more, closer than brothers, and  
so uselessly slain by glory's butcher on  
what was til then a nameless, ordinary field,  
unsure if we all were wildly mad, or not.

**VICTOR**

Clerval, who came to help me near the end  
when near all, already, in my life was lost --  
it wrenched the life from him who most deserved  
to keep and live it, to its fullest end.  
And then my father, strong and loving, he  
who by me stood unto the last, succumbed  
to sorrow's cudgel blows from its dread hand.  
And last -- and so to last until I end its life with mine --  
it killed my dearest, sweet Elizabeth,  
who true to my poor mother's dying wish  
stayed so devoted to this undeserving man.  
At last when on our wedding night, I dared to hope  
I might touch happiness again, it came,  
and put its hand around her throat and more  
than seal the breathing from her breast,  
like worst of Winter storms in Spring do break  
the twigs where new and tender blossoms bloom,  
did crack apart the bones that held her head --  
and so I found her on our marriage bed.  
And when it shows itself to you, I beg,  
you listen not to the sunlight sweetness of its voice,  
but drive this steel of death into its darkest heart.

**WALTON**

And how shall I know this demon if I see it?

**HOPKINS**

Oh Sir

**VICTOR**

It's here aboard your ship and you will know.  
Do you believe me now?

**WALTON**

No. ... Would you that I pretend I did?

So what does it look like so when I see it I  
will know to drive this steel of death into its heart?

**VICTOR**

You dare to laugh?

**WALTON**

I was thinking how much younger I was once --  
a soldier, eager for campaigns, then...  
and with the fleet, in Southern Spain, we called,  
and to a bullfight in a sun burnishing  
the world so warm, it hurts to think it now.  
The women, lace beside their hair, and eyes  
above the arcs held trembling in their hands --  
and I only of that was more fearful and more eager --  
in the arena where the music played as if  
the clarions would joyful tryst with death,  
and then, a god from yore of pagan times  
the horns above the proud-tossed head --  
the cavaliers dainty plant their darts,  
angry harrying the bull -- the slickwets  
of first blood like tearwelts stripe its hide  
and yet, its power undimmed, the swells beneath the skin  
rippling the gallop hooves into the sand  
at that silly jester's scarlet capering  
until at last, panting, bowed at bay,  
a final lunge at the tormenting one --  
and my gasping at how a man, unflinching  
sheathed the steel down through its nape  
to touch the heart buried beneath and stop  
the behemoth dead in its tracks.  
Oh aye, what prowess and command that gest,  
and yet, what unsung pain I glimpsed  
in the misting of its eyes -- all forgotten  
at the triumph crying from our throats,  
as if some demon had been quelled within  
enacting the killing of a noble, living thing.  
But I beg your pardon; I forget myself.  
Your demon then, what does it look like,  
did you say?

**VICTOR**

It appears, cowled and draped in capes and furs  
to hide its glistening self beneath  
and, though larger than a man, so cloaked  
it folds into the dark to seem not here, but is.

**WALTON** *to Hopkins*

Put on the sledding furs our guest left there.

**HOPKINS**

What Sir?

**WALTON**

Put on the sledding furs our guest left there.

**HOPKINS**

Oh no Sir, no; I would not seem the Demon, no, it

**WALTON** *laughing*

Put them on, we'll see if there's a demon in you ... you can play. For I would see this demon ... more than hear of it.

*Hopkins puts on Victor's furs.*

**VICTOR**

What's it matter if he looks much like it?

Indeed, when it appears, it cloaks itself like that to hide the horror that it is beneath.

**WALTON**

And when it came here to you in the dark, where did it stand, what did it do, or say just now when you say that it awakened, and tried to kill you, leaving as a present a notebook from your student days?

**VICTOR**

It was here I say as I and he are here!  
I was asleep and in this bunk like this, where you and ...

**HOPKINS**

I

**VICTOR**

you must have placed me,  
and like a figure hanging over me

**WALTON**

Hopkins, was that the place it was?

**VICTOR**

No, here it must have stood, and thus its furs

skirting the floor lapped against your face,  
and waked you -- and you saw beneath

**HOPKINS**

Oh, no...

**VICTOR**

You lie. Why do you lie? You saw it.

**WALTON**

Enough! I would you showed me what it did.

**VICTOR**

and like a shadow hanging over me  
it stretched its clawhand and closed my throat.

**WALTON**

Like that Hopkins, like that?

**HOPKINS**

No, I would not pretend...

**WALTON**

Aye! And those others whom you speak of  
you say it killed them too that way?

**VICTOR**

It did. It did.

**WALTON**

A tale of dread and bloodshed, which well could be a play?

**WINSLOW**

What Sir?

**WALTON**

Aye, Winslow aye! This is the respite that we seek!  
Go to the men and let them know that once  
they have oh ev'ry bit of this dear ship  
assayed and passed in most caring review  
through a score of days or other measure  
that you set to let the mind break up  
the fleeting constancy of time -- and then  
again, and again once more if we're here still --  
then days of sport and play-going there'll be --  
for when at evening they take their rest  
well you and I, our guest, and our good demon here



**HOPKINS**

oh Sir, oh no I cannot -- no, not play

**WALTON**

you can. And will. And will do well.  
For I and Winslow will your prompters be.  
and you, my friend, will tell us all your tale

**VICTOR**

my story's not for mocking in a play.

**WALTON**

Not mocking Sir, oh truly not. And yes,  
now here it's I that ask that you believe.  
You would that I believed you, and I, I would  
that you help us in making for my crew  
an evening's presentation, so piteous  
and frightening that it makes them all forget  
the pity and the fright that Nature holds  
for us in this pale, endless cold.  
Aye, Winslow, tell them so they talk of it,  
with expectation, as at work's end  
they take their shiv'ring rest, and we,  
as we take ours will in my cabin here  
prepare for them a play to hear and to see --  
so thus they too will know the story that  
you say did bring you here to join our ship and crew --  
that, they will surely talk about and want to know.

**VICTOR**

And will you believe me then?

**WALTON**

I believe what I am shown, not merely told.  
Go, put in place, in steps, preparing them,  
this ship's new cycle of its work and days  
to last through this strange, cold becalment  
that all must trust will someday end, and I  
shall follow, in every instance to support  
the work you put in place with them, and well!

**WINSLOW**

Aye aye Sir. I will do my best.

**WALTON**

And in our time of leisure with our guest,  
we'll put in place the showing of his quest.

And all the sorrow and adventure you have known  
we'll make of the tale you tell a play that's shown.

**VICTOR**

If it would bring you to believe me, well then...

**HOPKINS**

Sir... But, Sir ... Oh, Sir...

*All go off.*



*Background is same as previous: cabin -- with quarterdeck above -- and adjunct area. The cabin has been got up to represent Victor's rooms at the university in Ingolstadt where he brings his hideous progeny to life. The adjunct area represents Victor's home in Geneva, and then a snowy countryside though which the Demon (played by Hopkins) flees, and a shepherds' encampment where it finds refuge. The Demon plays from the cabin. Margaret and Elizabeth play from the adjunct area. Victor, Walton, Winslow and Hopkins play from both the cabin and adjunct area. The -- unseen -- crew is the audience for the playing of Victor's story.*

**WALTON** *first welcoming the -- unseen -- crewmen as they file in, take their places etc., then as The Prologue*

Aye! Aye, my hearties, for that you are --  
and welcome too, with all my heart.

There, serry! Serry! Range yourselves  
in ranks close ordered before this cabin's stage  
for these sea-stained and rough-hewn planks  
are now the benches of our theater's pit,  
and these low rooftrees now the soaring,  
ceiling chandeliered with trembling light --  
and oh if only from the galleries and boxes of  
these bulkheads and their stanchions glowed  
the damasks' red and pilasters also chased in gold,  
and from them leaned down for our eyes  
the ladies, looking, bending to review  
who else is there to share the night's bright play.  
Tonight, and here, we'll share the one that's ours --  
for I am proud of you -- you have stood firm  
(but for how much longer before desperation...)  
against the hard adversity that yet  
does hold us here, but it will end --

we shall sail free if we hold fast!  
For now, our ship is coldly beached stone still  
as if a building at the juncture of its streets.  
And aye, why not, the threat'ning howl and reach  
of our pale field of endless, windswept ice  
in an imagination's trice for now we'll make  
the fields of Lincoln's Inn where playgoers  
ahastening a balmy evening in Spring  
between the carriages and crowds  
through Bridge Street down to Drury Lane do run  
to reach their places by the curtain's rise?  
Aye, for I am proud of you -- since in these days  
you have assayed, repaired and put to test  
oh every last thread and splinter of this ship --  
aye! as this sun that never sets' a fire  
that casts in our world's cave the blurred  
and lying shadow of the ideals of all things  
so you have made the shadow of this ship  
as sharp and true as human work it can.  
And then tomorrow when this respite  
and our days of rest they end, we shall begin again!  
And now, I am the prologue to this play:  
our scene the glorious pinnacles of the Alps,  
grand and looming down in deepest green  
to lakes of slivered silver with marble towns  
strewn like toys of giants on their banks;  
and here, in the heaven of his childhood comes  
the guest we rescued from the icy sea,  
who then from hardship was so wracked and worn,  
but now's a handsome student full of youth  
here to tell us what he says is his tale's truth.

### **VICTOR**

I am by birth a Genevese, and proud  
of that self-governing Republic's way of life.  
My father was a man of deeply held ideals.  
His was a tried and true devotion to  
well-being and just-ruling of the city,  
freely and by nature given, not from fear  
of shame nor imitation of any said  
his masters or his betters. Middle-aged,  
he let go his place in public service  
to those younger whose ambition he had formed,  
and late in life, at last he saw fit to marry.  
My mother was the daughter of a merchant,  
a man my father held in friendship and regard.  
This merchant lost his fortune and in pride

retreated from society, and fell,  
thrifless, quickly into poverty.  
My father, when he heard of this searched out  
the friend he had lost sight of, finding him, too late.  
To honor him he wished had asked for help,  
he took the sheltering of the daughter on himself.  
And from the deathbed where she wept he placed  
her with relations in Geneva near his house.  
Duty's visits to his ward in time became,  
as kindness and courage in her heart won his,  
a suitor's wooing of an admired betrothed.  
They took to traveling through Italy and then,  
between the shadow of Vesuvius and  
the sun-struck idyl of the island of Capri,  
I spilled from out the tunnel of her womb  
to sep'rate life in the tumult of Naples' light.  
And thinking back to then I ask again  
how such happy childhood did begin  
my destiny, to such unhappy end.

*In adjunct space are Walton, as Alphonse, Victor's father, and Margaret, as  
Caroline, Victor's mother, holding a baby.*

**MARGARET** *as Caroline, laughing, playing with the baby*

Kookooloo! Kookee kookee kookooloo!  
Ohooohoo! Victor!  
Kookooloo! Kookee kookee kookooloo!  
Ohooohoo! Victor!  
It's you! It's you! Victor! Oh Victor, yes it's you!  
Oh, my most extraordinary and beloved one!  
You! My one and only first-born son!  
You, already, as I hold your face to mine,  
are a person of ... oh! your power and your beauty...  
The resplendent wonder of you in my eyes  
and all the world's is greater happiness  
than my poor grateful, human soul can stand.

**THE DEMON** *momentarily emerging from hiding from where it has been  
watching, and seen and heard only by the members of the audience as Margaret  
as Caroline keeps playing with baby*

And how much greater the despair that weighs  
upon a consciousness completely free  
of any hope an other gracious being might  
deign to hold its face to mine and loom --  
oh ev'ry kind word and ev'ry loving look  
another soft weft thread in shedspace laced  
through taut and twisted warp threads of my self  
to weave a body's soul strong supple web?

Oh weariness of solitude, oh bring --  
descending through the dark I hold, closed,  
behind my eyes -- bring me to death right now.  
Oh I have been alone, alone, oh so alone  
since my unasked for bitter life began.  
Oh would my tears scald me blind  
so I'd not see, and know so clear the pain  
of how I ache for a love like this, for me.  
And seeing this, my maker loved,  
with such intensity of tenderness  
and caring patience to lead into the world,  
the angry envy in me stirs again,  
and I am kindled to revenge and kill. *returns to hiding*

**MARGARET** *as Caroline, laughing, playing with the baby*

Kookooloo! Kookee kookee kookooloo!  
Ohooohoo! Victor!  
Kookooloo! Kookee kookee kookooloo!  
Ohooohoo! Victor!  
It's you! It's you! Victor! Oh Victor, yes it's you!  
Oh my extraordinary, wonderful, beautiful you!

**WALTON** *as Alphonse*

My love for you in strength and wisdom grows,  
as pride brings tears to my eyes as I  
do look upon and hold both you and him --  
my first-born son, the princely, strong and wise  
protector of my fam'ly's name and house.  
Oh my Victor, all I have that I can give,  
and all that I wish best for you are one.  
What you have given in giving me this son  
is in the living wonder of him more  
than in any expectation ever I imagined.

**MARGARET** *as Caroline, laughing, playing with the baby*

And now you have a rival for my heart.  
With your eyes my Victor, tell him. Is it not so?  
Yes there's mama, papa, and then there's Victor!  
Tell him with our look of eyes to eyes,  
locked in a oneness face to face,  
that in its way is close as that as when  
you in my womb were one with me.  
Where would I be had you not taken me  
to be your wife? What rude experience  
might life have held for me, alone, without  
a father's house? And you, my love, my love,  
have given me this chance to live and love,

and have this child. My love for you  
grows stronger, deeper. I arch beneath  
your face to mine, as land in Spring  
does open to the warming kiss, the force  
that ever high'r through length'ning days does bring  
such sweet renew'l to ev'ry living thing.

*baby squalls*

Oh my Victor, you must be hungry now.

**WALTON** *as Alphonse*

Of brothers and of sisters for him we  
should think -- so he will have the company  
of family companions better than  
those that you and I would make for play.  
And we must think of educating them.  
That too, I had not thought of until now.  
Their education, an inward, mighty balance  
it should be, that yet sways gently, tugged  
by rich and massy goldenweights,  
both slowly built through caring, daily thrift --  
one that tends to self-serving individuality  
and the other to the service of community,  
and neither one ever so far outbalancing  
the other that a fillip of sound reason  
won't return them to their tipping point.

*Winslow, playing guitar, accompanies Margaret as Caroline singing to baby.*

**MARGARET** *as Caroline, singing*

Name baby, name, name  
what is your name name?  
Love baby love love  
who is your love love?  
Sleep baby sleep sleep  
where is your sleep sleep?  
You are my love, love  
love is our name love.  
Sleep in my song, love,  
sweet sleep so strong love.  
Long as I live love  
you'll be my deep love.  
Life of my womb, love  
now in the world, love.  
Long as I live love  
when we were one, love  
that's how I'll remember

you now and forever.  
Sleep baby sleep sleep  
in sweet peace so deep.

*The Demon, momentarily emerging from hiding from where it has been watching, and seen and heard only by the members of the audience, joins Margaret as Caroline singing.*

**THE DEMON & MARGARET** as Caroline, singing

Name baby, name, name  
what is your name name? / I have no name name.  
Love baby love love  
who is your love, love? / I know no love, I.  
Sleep baby sleep sleep  
where is your sleep sleep? / for me there's no sleep, me.  
Long as I live love / Long as I live life  
when we were one, love / always alone I  
that's how I'll remember / oh how I'll remember  
you now and forever. / I'm lonely forever.  
Sleep baby sleep sleep  
in sweet peace so deep. / death your soul will keep.

**VICTOR**

And thus, the eldest son, I became  
the conqueror at the center of their lives,  
certain I was destined for great things,  
with only which achievements, to experience left  
to be discovered. And how I rue  
my bent that took me soon to delve as deep  
as human knowledge can into the secret springs  
of heaven, earth and life itself.  
Like my dear friend, Clerval, I wish I'd taken  
to poetry and politics, affairs of hearts and minds,  
and not the deepest mechanisms  
of matter and of nature that underpin it all.  
At seventeen, my childhood barely ending  
my father he resolved I should become  
a student at the university of Ingolstadt  
to complete my learning and become acquainted  
with the customs of a country other than my own.  
The carriage came that fateful morning and  
I slumped in it reflecting on my exile  
from my happy home and the old familiar faces  
of brothers, of my father, of Clerval,  
and of my dear, faithful Elizabeth  
and of my mother whom I would never see again.  
They came to see me off; it was the most

that I could do to keep back tears, seem brave,  
and not give in to desperation,  
and foreboding at the child dying within.

*all in confused unison, with Victor as if in a carriage leaving*

**WALTON** *as Alphonse*

Good-bye my son, stay proud and steadfast in  
your habits and your purpose and remember  
all our faith in you and all our hopes for you.

**MARGARET** *as Caroline*

Oh my dearest Victor, I cannot bear to see you go,  
you my first-born, lovely little princely one  
that I love so -- and go you must but I ...  
my loving heart rebels at my own reason's rule,  
crushed within me by the welling of my tears,  
and leaving only all my prayers to go with you.

**ELIZABETH**

My silence, Victor, speaks my longing --  
you will achieve so much I know, and you must go --  
but already how I miss your return to me.

**HOPKINS** *as Clerval*

I would still go with you my dear friend,  
but you know why I can't but still --  
embrace me once again for all our days at play.

**WALTON** *as Alphonse*

My Caroline, it must be so -- hard as it is, I know.

**MARGARET** *as Caroline*

I know, but ask me not to hide my sorrow.

**VICTOR**

Clerval, Clerval -- your name I'll keep  
a touchstone for the light of friendship in  
the solitary dark of life.  
And Elizabeth, Elizabeth, remember me,  
and keep my mother in your care.  
Good-bye, Papa; good-bye, Mama.

**ELIZABETH**

Oh my Victor, if you knew my love.

**VICTOR**

And so I left them, in sadness without words.  
I hardly spoke, I think, until the spires



of Ingolstadt, and the newness of the challenge  
of mast'ring life at university  
did coax out some desire for life in me.  
Unknown to me I left behind what soon  
became a scene of greater desolation --  
my mother's death, an omen of my future misery.

**MARGARET** *as Caroline*

Oh water, just a tiny sip, so fresh  
from melting snows, that I can hardly swallow  
for this all-filling fever swells my throat.

**WALTON** *as Alphonse*

Doctor, what can be done?

**WINSLOW** *as doctor*

I have done what I can. Rest now, rest -- that is all.

**WALTON** *as Alphonse*

No. ... No. I cannot think of life without her.

**ELIZABETH**

Here, my beloved lady.

**HOPKINS** *as Clerval*

Elizabeth, I am as stricken here as you.

**ELIZABETH**

Clerval, Clerval, help me hold her.

**HOPKINS** *as Clerval*

She is so pale and weak.

**MARGARET** *as Caroline*

How cool it feels, yet how hard it is to drink.  
I thank you truly. What news is there of my Victor?  
And where are my Ernest and my William?

**ELIZABETH**

Ernest and William soon will be back from school.  
Justine your most loving servant she will come  
with them to see you (as she too, heartbroken,  
dares not tell them, but they sense so well something's  
so wrong) and they will soon be here to see you.  
(Are they coming now?)

**HOPKINS** *as Clerval*

(Yes, I'm sure. I sent Justine -- distraught --

but, stronghearted, all the more clearminded for it.)

**ELIZABETH**

Justine has gone for them and they will soon  
be here to see you. They are ... oh!  
as you so well do know and love them --  
just thinking of them is itself a joy.

**MARGARET** *as Caroline*

It is. It is. And I will miss them so.

**ELIZABETH**

Oh my sweet lady, do not even say... Oh...  
for they will be here any instant now.  
Your William is the most life-full, bright-eyed  
and dancing cherub of a boy,  
as if in armfuls taking in so fiercely  
all there is of life and learning -- til bedtime,  
and collapsing, from every day's long exhilaration.  
And Earnest -- youth just begun and boyhood  
not yet ended -- in love with school for all the friends,  
but not at all for poring closely over books,  
and ever brimming over with insouciant,  
intrepid laughter, so all the world laughs with him,  
following him on any venture he might lead.

**MARGARET** *as Caroline*

And you my dear Elizabeth, will care  
for them I know, and love them as I do.

**ELIZABETH**

My lady Caroline -- oh say it is not so...

**MARGARET** *as Caroline*

And of my eldest, Victor -- he here will not

**ELIZABETH**

No but he

**HOPKINS** *as Clerval*

has written me, and we have best news of him.

**ELIZABETH**

He has?

**HOPKINS** *as Clerval*

Well, yes, yes a bit -- oh yes! Oh, he has --  
in letters full of fine-drawn anecdote,

he tells us of his early college days --  
the teachers that he met who prompted him  
to follow on his bent for physics and  
for chemistry, and soon -- I think he wrote --  
success, just as expected, many friends,  
professors' admiration for his balance,  
the justness of his judgment and his reason's calm

**VICTOR**

(It was its opposite, obsession, as I threw myself  
into the ever-faster, deepening vortex of  
in-gathering the knowledge-hoard I craved --  
needed! -- to overpower the deepest mysteries of life.)

**VICTOR & HOPKINS** *as Clerval, together*  
to make you proud of me/him as one who did achieve  
great things as you did both expect of me/him.

**WALTON** *as Alphonse*

That there is greatness in my Victor, dear Clerval,  
I never doubted -- if only it be as you describe.

**MARGARET** *as Caroline*

It is as he describes, it is, my love.  
Do you remember how it was those many years,  
but yet it feels...

**WINSLOW** *as doctor*

Lady Caroline, rest if you please for

**MARGARET** *as Caroline*

soon  
it will be over so I would remember well  
all that in my life was best. You do remember  
how we were sure that we could see the great  
strong goodness of his genius in his eyes  
from the very start when he was born?

**WALTON** *as Alphonse*

I so remember his, and Ernest and William's  
new presence in our lives, and oh my love,  
I remember ev'ry kiss and conversation, all  
that we have shared, and now, oh now...

**MARGARET** *as Caroline*

Take my hand, so I may take, my love,  
the strength of yours with me. You will remain  
a loving father to them all, so I

may die at peace, as now it pleases God I must.  
Elizabeth, my firmest hopes are placed upon  
the prospect of your and Victor's married happiness.

**ELIZABETH**

I will be faithful to him to the end,  
my lady, oh my lady, and with all my heart  
will give him what happiness I can, for you  
and for myself.

**MARGARET** *as Caroline*

With that assurance, in all your love, I turn away.

**THE DEMON** *momentarily emerging from hiding from where it has been watching, and seen and heard only by the members of the audience*

They die, the humans, bodies extinguished  
like those of flies or any other beast;  
but by culture, the living, make distinguished,  
a spirit from the flesh, in their memory at least.  
All other creatures leave their dead, unrecognized  
as dead, like leaves to rot upon the ground.  
But these would make their dead apotheosized,  
by ritual, that on their fears they'd found.  
So dead, the living think you live, so long  
as you, in the light of their remembrance are kept.  
How vain, but enviable, the human life-song,  
so brief, but like the lilt of lightning melody that leapt  
into the mind for its moment makes forgot  
that we who live, to die, were all begot. *returns to hiding*

**VICTOR**

And so I learned of it, my mother's death,  
and I fell, like the letter from my hand --  
the groan that welled from me a strangled breath,  
the tears, the rush of a lifetime's worth of love at end.  
I struggled to continue, as if nothing new,  
denying, that today, like yesterday, seeing her again  
was possible in time -- so again, put off anew.  
But now, her loving eyes on me, I'll never see again.  
But tide of habit, stress of living, ever-warning,  
soon lifts us back to action -- against the lethargy  
of pain, few can afford much pine and mourning,  
for necessity soon impinges with all its dull energy.  
We wonder how others live with great loss and pain,  
forgetting, that nature cauterizes to keep us sane.  
My ceaseless work, with destructive intensity,  
ever further, drew me from all else -- and I let it.

I became disquieting to all I frequented --  
and they dwindled, including my teachers  
as I surpassed them, until I was alone,  
alone with what I achieved: my creature.  
I lived closeted in my rooms, they were  
an unkept charnel house, the shambled  
reflection of my ambition's horror  
though I saw them as the workshop of my glory.  
I left them only to troll the city's world  
of sick and dying -- the churning, like goods  
through a market, of those at last enticed  
beyond the edge of the ballroom floor  
by dancing death -- and that I pillaged  
for organs, freshly dead, that I might, dissecting,  
somehow coax and galvanize, spellcast up,  
engend'ring from within the spark of life and growth.  
What I achieved was great indeed, and had  
not this creation 'scaped from my control  
and run amok destroying all there was  
of good and sensible in my life,  
my fame -- renown! -- would lord over the world,  
and I'd not have lived hiding guilty shame  
at the hideous progeny I made that was  
to be so good, and yet turned out so wrong.  
Yes, then, a grim November night of cold  
and rain and lightning -- how many hours on end  
had I bent to my microscopes and labors --  
despairing yet convinced one more, one more, action,  
and the tangle of cells and membranes so far  
in scale at my instruments' end, so close  
at hand before my face, and ever still,  
as if I could forever recompile them, bring them close,  
but never spark them to self-directed growth,  
might, at last, somehow, take up life of their own.  
Within I felt my mind careening wildly,  
as my body, at the precipice of exhaustion,  
teetered at the edge of consciousness;  
fainting, slipping from my instruments and table,  
I sighed a last breath on my work --  
and at that instant as I fell I think  
that lightening bolted through the room but I  
remember nothing clearly of that now  
as I must have lain upon the floor,  
I know not how long.

**THE DEMON** *momentarily emerging from hiding from where it has been watching, and seen and heard only by the members of the audience*

Better you had spilled it all, the vessel  
that nurtured me, as you were falling  
and I had not lived, left alone to wrestle  
with mere self-survival's bitter calling.  
Tell it again, for hearing by your vanity,  
your tale of your heroic struggle -- how, possessed,  
and so then blameless by insanity,  
you dared for glory, so proud to be obsessed.  
There is nothing men will not forgive themselves,  
no killing, crimes, destruction or unkindness;  
for all, they never fail to give themselves  
a heroic tale to memorialize the mindless.  
When I, as calm as death, shall triumph over you,  
there'll be no tale to tell, by me, nor you.  
So now, in the brightness of the day,  
awake and discover, the fleshy clay  
you breathed to life, but soon will give way  
from hero's triumph to fool's comic play. *returns to hiding*

### **VICTOR**

When I awoke the lightening light -- that I  
may well have dreamed for all I know -- that from  
the storm an arc of sparking sear swept through  
this room, a galvanizing hand of God,  
had given way to limpid sunlight's resplendent play,  
as if blessing all with the brightness of the day.  
So sorely from where I'd fallen, I lifted me  
up from the ground, and sudden struck by fear  
of loss of all my work, of having to begin again,  
I reached to check the warming coils I'd placed  
around the vessel where I strained to knit  
life up again from organs that had been  
themselves once parts of living things.  
There, as tired I leaned to rearrange  
the scatter of my instruments and tools,  
there! amid the membrane swaddling in  
the basin pool, oh there...there so like  
a tiny star of fishpink flesh, and trembling  
its limbs at me...alive...alive, and as if gesturing to me.  
I had done it. I had. Made life anew.  
I breathed, and sighed, and closed my eyes,  
and triumph like a killing surged through me.  
I saw the world in awe of me through fame!  
What no, no man had ever done, I had,  
and soon, the world would know of my so great  
and good achievement in making human life,  
and I'd transcend my mere, small self and bask

in worship of my high and just renown.  
And quickly I went back to work and put in place  
all needed for my creature's growth and health.  
Those days, it grew apace -- and more than that --  
and I, I slept the peaceful, happy sleep  
of those who have attained a long-sought goal,  
and believe that they need quest no more.  
Awake, I would admire my work, and say  
my name out loud -- my family's name that now  
because of me would live for time untold --  
then I would sleep again, and wake to dream  
my time of fame so soon to come, I thought.  
I had the leisure now, for my creation thrived  
all on its own, and so I rested -- I could, for it  
did need no care it seemed; the nourishment  
I left, so like a feral thing, it quickly learned  
to feed upon completely on its own.  
It grew, and grew, so fast, with no abatement --  
life's orderly sorcery gone mad  
(how quickly doubts do turn to dread) --  
as I in dawning horror looked on the confusion  
of what was to be human in its form,

*Hopkins, as The Demon, is seen stirring, trying to look like he's growing in Victor's workshop; tittering is heard from -- unseen -- crew as they find their shipmate ludicrous. Walton, with a glare and gesture, tries to silence them. (Walton and Winslow are back on in cabin space, fretting about the -- unseen -- crew's unruly reaction to Hopkins' portrayal of The Demon.)*

but was a tangled, moving progeny  
of blood-dark, glistening disorder --  
as if a baby, but inside out, was living,  
and ever stronger, growing ever faster.  
The thrilling confidence of my joy  
shattered into waves of sickened fear.  
I saw that growing, it would soon escape  
from my control, and I thought to kill it.  
I took a knife and stretched forth my hand  
to search out for its throat, and lo!  
a voice so sweet did tumble forth from it  
and like a burning ecstasy brushed my ears  
as its eyes a plea for pity seized on mine --  
for it would speak its self to me and

*Hopkins, as The Demon, tries burbling sweetly like a baby, and the -- unseen -- crew bursts out in taunts and guffaws at him.*

**WALTON**

Avast! Avast there with your gawfs and jibes!  
Silence! By God, my hearties, do you dare  
to laugh at your best shipmate's strive to show  
a creature full of agony and life,  
that does not know it has no hope?  
What you see there's not Hopkins painted, playing,  
but a hid'ous progeny 'bout to plunge, headlong,  
lost and uncomprehending, into the dark  
adventure of unhappy destiny.  
And I say you will see it as I do,  
and master the mutinous defiance of  
your angry, desperate, violent ways.

**WINSLOW**

Aye, or rue not seeing it as the captain says.

*Hopkins, as The Demon, again tries burbling sweetly like a baby, as Victor takes up where they left off.*

**VICTOR**

for it would speak its self to me, and I  
thrilled to who it was speaking to me,  
but at the horror of the clash that I had made,  
I closed my eyes, I turned my face, and ran away.

*Victor goes off. Hopkins, as The Demon, keeps burbling and flailing, trying to look like the new-born monster, growing recipitously, etc. The -- unseen -- crew, hooting and whistling, and calling him by name, starts jeering Hopkins.*

**HOPKINS** to Walton

I can't, Sir. Please Sir, I beg you, no more.

**A SAILOR** as -- unseen -- crew explodes in catcalls and roistering

I can't, Sir. Please Sir, I beg you, no more.

**WINSLOW**

Sir, do we belay, call the crew to quarters and

**WALTON**

No, we finish what we've begun.  
Steady, Hopkins, steady; we will make them see.  
And you, look at him. Look at him, I say,  
and see him as I ask you to, not as you do.

**WINSLOW**

And look in silence lest the lash  
be brought to use upon this ship and it --



and you -- become like all the others,  
vessels ruled by fear, manned by fearful men.

### **WALTON**

Look at him I say, and fear not to see him --  
not the shipmate, burning in your gaze,  
but the creature, new-born, full-grown  
(Hopkins, to it) -- see the way the light  
so hurts its eyes and how it writhes as if  
within the self was tumbling in an avalanche  
of sharp sensations from the panoply  
of restless senses so undistinguishable one  
from another for it knows no words  
to set apart the light from dark, the sound  
from silence, warmth from cold and smell from breathe --  
it even cannot wish for the cool taste of water  
for the pangs of thirst and hunger that it feels  
with such awareness, it, so desperate and ignorant,  
can only cast about to wildly test  
of what the world does offer to the sight  
and smell and hearing that might be good  
for to slake and satisfy the cries within.

**THE DEMON** *momentarily emerging from hiding from where it has been  
watching, and seen and heard only by the members of the audience*

And I, who had almost forgotten, those first --  
like lightning flashes harrowing out  
the marrow of a tree and leaving a sundered  
scorching bole -- moments of my life,  
that did so fiercely take the full-grown oak  
of me and burning scission it a crippled stump.

### **WALTON**

And we, who have had our hearts so hardened,  
taught ourselves to turn away to struggle on,  
so coldly taking in the sight of shipmates  
a sudden from their stations torn by fouling accident  
or by towering wave awash swept lost to sea,  
oh even we, would we not pity it?  
(Good, Hopkins, good. And again, more frantic and insensate.)  
Such a base, and rage and whimpering unsightly beast --  
yet almost like us in glance and cunning,  
in the energy and agile of its haunted search,  
so if a shipmate, brought here aboard, by me,  
how would...? If staunch and steady, pulling all  
its watches and making up the shirkers' share of work  
but just in appearance so inhuman, so like that...

What would you take it in as one of you, or us?  
It's but the habitual judgment of the mind  
that makes us draw the line somewhere, and set  
apart the equal creature from the unequal other.  
(Aye, Hopkins aye, you have them now.)  
See him, raging in the rooms, a god  
from nature's bestiary, and now surprised  
at the cage he recognizes is enclosing him.

**THE DEMON** *momentarily emerging from hiding from where it has been  
watching, and seen and heard only by the members of the audience*

My pain so great, my fear so acute,  
I felt the walls crush in around me and  
the sound and fury of my raging brought  
a terror face-to-face to me so great  
I now still tremble in its recall.

**WALTON** *as Victor's landlord, carrying stick*

Watchman, watchman, succor now, now!  
I, the landlord to a student, fear the din --  
an assault upon him in his rooms and harm  
to him and to my furnishings might come.

**WINSLOW** *as a night watchman, carrying stick*

Is here the room whence come these cries?

**WALTON** *as Victor's landlord, carrying stick*

Aye.

*Crew -- unseen -- roars with laughter as Walton and Winslow, respectively, as  
Victor's landlord and a night watchman, burst upon Hopkins, as the Demon,  
who, petrified with fear, is attacked by the two who are equally terrified of the  
hideous progeny. Hopkins, as The Demon, is beaten bloody, and the -- unseen -  
- crew roars with exited approbation until Hopkins, as the Demon, screams and  
flees, taking the notebook.*

**WALTON** *as Victor's landlord, carrying stick*

What has happened to my rooms? Oh, he will pay!

**WINSLOW** *as a night watchman, carrying stick and catching sight of  
Hopkins, as the Demon*

Oh God, what beast is this that huddles there?

**WALTON** *as Victor's landlord, carrying stick, also catching sight of Hopkins,  
as the Demon*

A devil, a veritable devil that has killed my tenant.

We must kill it, kill this demon now before it kills again!

*They attack Hopkins, as the Demon, who, uncomprehending, finally screams and flees, going off.*

**WINSLOW** *as a night watchman, carrying stick*

It has escaped; the evil thing has fled.

Without its body, all will scoff at us,

and none believe what evil we have seen.

What demon was this that bled so like a man?

**WALTON** *as Victor's landlord, carrying stick*

It fled into the night's dark cold.

All holy beings come, come to us now;

protect us from its dark return.

We must make haste to find my tenant.

If he is dead, then who will pay?

*Walton and Winslow, respectively, as Victor's landlord and a night watchman, go off, as Hopkins, as the Demon, comes on, collapsing from exhaustion.*

**THE DEMON** *momentarily emerging from hiding from where it has been watching, and seen and heard only by the members of the audience*

The humans who hit and hit me knew not...

They knew not what? That I feared them

as they feared me? And would they have had

the courage of some kindness then,

then would that have won me to mansuetude?

I ran and ran with all the power of youth

into the strangeness of the night -- my feet,

I felt it was the natural thing to keep

them in the air for on the ground the white

that clung to them and all around laced down

to touch me in the dark, so made them burn

that soon they seared away to madly numbing me.

I was naked in the snow and didn't know it.

My breathing foamed upon my face; I was

unable to go on, yet knew I could not stop.

I sensed what that would be -- and feared -- though I

had no name for it yet, I knew right then

the breath of life I drew within so warm

could end, and I would fall -- and almost did,

a stone cold thing aground to death so numb.

I was now far from what I later learned

was called a town, and entering a wood

to die among the trees huddled from the wind,

I clasped the thing I took and raised my head

to gasp a last cold breath -- and glimpsed a light.

I rose and made my way, lifted beyond my strength

by what I later learned was human hope.  
I stumbled heedless, drawn by firelight first,  
and then it came, enveloping the world of me  
and took me by the ears and turned my face  
up to the night where I, I saw her sing  
a shining sheen of firelight blessing me.

*Walton and Margaret and Winslow (with guitar), as shepherds, sing and dance  
around a fire by their shelter, as Hopkins, as the Demon, approaches them  
entranced.*

**MARGARET** *as shepherdess*  
La-la-la tra-la-la la-di-da la-di-dai-ra.  
Three words, and your way with me  
you'll have for joying night and day.  
Three words though that bewitchingly  
must truth that's in your heart display.  
La-la-la tra-la-la la-di-da la-di-dai-ra.

**WALTON** *as shepherd*  
La-la-la tra-la-la la-di-da la-di-dai-ra.  
Three words, and you, my beauty, you  
I'll have for joying my life away.  
Three words that for long I'll rue  
if it's you that with truth do play.  
La-la-la tra-la-la la-di-da la-di-dai-ra.

**MARGARET** *as shepherdess*  
La-la-la tra-la-la la-di-da la-di-dai-ra.  
Three words as true as my love for you  
is all that is asked for all I'll give you.  
Three words though that must be truly said  
or you'll lie alone in your lonely bed.  
La-la-la tra-la-la la-di-da la-di-dai-ra.

**WALTON** *as shepherd*  
La-la-la tra-la-la la-di-da la-di-dai-ra.  
Lying's an art needed to rule;  
but also used to make man love's fool --  
three words then that in my ken  
make women better liars than men.  
La-la-la tra-la-la la-di-da la-di-dai-ra.

**MARGARET AND WALTON** *as shepherds*  
La-la-la tra-la-la la-di-da la-di-dai-ra.  
It's said God said lying's a sin --  
what's all to lose when heaven's to win?  
Three words, three words, oh 'deed I do --

so giving my self I say I love you.  
La-la-la tra-la-la la-di-da la-di-dai-ra.

*Hopkins, as the Demon, comes in on Walton and Margaret and Winslow, as shepherds, who, surprised and terrified, run away. Hopkins, as the Demon, uncomprehending and exhausted, turns to figuring out -- confusedly, by trail-and-error -- how to get warm by the fire and feed wood to it, dress in the capes and furs left by them, kill and eat a lamb also left by them, and drink the wine they left behind. As this pantomime continues, Hopkins, as the Demon, clearly revivifying, starts trying to make words. Warm, fed, rested, and in wonderment, Hopkins, as the Demon, sees the moon, and starts braying tenderly at it. Hopkins as the Demon, trying to sing and move rhythmically, chants and shuffles shamanistically, circling the fire in a trance.*

**THE DEMON** momentarily emerging from hiding from where it has been watching, and seen and heard only by the members of the audience

If I had not been born full grown, I'd not  
have learned so much so quickly -- no, oh no;  
but I'd have languished in my brute, blind lot  
until by trial and stumble I'd have come to know.  
Know what? Know ritual -- and what of it?  
Just gesture, so hewed to, the more to hide  
our own invention of it -- shackled to love it  
for how its hum and prayer it helps abide  
the constant lightning in the cortexed skull.  
Our blessings and our shibboleths they find,  
ascending to the welkin's topsyturvy hull,  
their answer and their mirror in our mind.  
Oh how would I, drawn as a flooding tide,  
rise up in prayer to this welling muse inside!  
And thus did I begin my education,  
all on my own, to progress into future,  
so feared, unknown -- as if by imitation  
I might possess a power of culture,  
and win some peace within to keep at bay  
the wilding rage of chaos engorged to kill.  
I understood nothing, and every pained assay  
at comprehending more took ferocious will.  
How anger and frustration do take their toll  
and ritual's quiescence does ever suffice --  
so to bleed and kill to again feel whole,  
we draw from vengeful violence holy sacrifice.  
But if I could turn to other ones of me  
or to God -- I'd no longer be, so desperately free.  
Hail, celestial radiance nimbed with light  
your song is like the fire that warms me now  
reverberating through ev'ry nerve with might

of sounds unchained from words yet words enow.  
I beg you forge me to your presence mild,  
your silv'ry lap of lightness on the world,  
resplendent beauty so bespeaking kind  
and gentle Nature, that yet feels hurled  
unfolding inside time in our weak grasp  
and conscious ache to compass you  
in wordwhirls of incantatory rasp.  
We sway and sing and whining weave our way  
through inward caverns echoing with words we pray.



*Background is same as previous: cabin -- with quarterdeck above -- and adjunct area. The cabin is as it was when Victor and the Demon came aboard the ship, but includes a representation of a lean-to from which can be observed goings on inside the cottage of De Lacey, Felix and Agatha. The adjunct area variously represents a trial court, a stony shoreline in Ireland, a wedding chamber overlooking lake Orta, and the living area of the cottage of De Lacey, Felix and Agatha. The Demon plays from the cabin. Margaret and Elizabeth play from the adjunct area. Victor, Walton, Winslow and Hopkins play from both the cabin and adjunct area. The -- unseen -- crew is the audience for the playing of the continuation of Victor's story.*

**WALTON, WINSLOW & HOPKINS** *drinking and singing with -- unseen - - crew, and in their costumes for playing, respectively, a judge, a prosecuting attorney, and Clerval*

I sailed away a sailor boy,  
hoh-oh, oh my hearties,  
to live my life on the briny sea  
where there's no maids or parties.

So back ashore I thought to wed  
and won a lass so bonny.  
We lived the joy of our sweet bed,  
long days and nights so nonny.

Impressed upon a man o' war  
my happiness was ended.  
To live the life of a jack tar sore  
was not what I'd intended.

For years away and fights at sea,  
I kept her face before me.

At last for home when mustered free,  
I found she had children for me.

"Why did you break your troth with me?"  
Said she, "I thought long dead you'd be."  
A broken man gone back to sea,  
I sailed away again you see.

So there I was a gun deck lad  
in broadsides' bloody fury --  
a memory to leave all mad  
who live to tell the story.

Enthralled by majesty of war,  
I'm lost, son of a gun so poor --  
my love's now that old filthy whore  
that in battle plies her cunt galore.

Take up your cup of burning grog  
and drink to me right sadly;  
for we'll all live in blasted fog,  
til end our lives right madly.

I sailed away a sailor boy,  
hoh-oh, oh my hearties,  
to live our lives on the briny sea  
where there's no maids or parties.

*raucous laughter and cheering from -- unseen -- crew as Winslow, as a  
prosecuting attorney, Victor, as himself as a young man, and Hopkins, as  
Clerval, moving to adjunct area, ready to continue Victor's story*

### **WALTON**

Avast there then with all this folderol,  
and on to play our story...  
(as if departing on an interlude,  
that like a lifetime quickly arcs from dark  
to dark, the scintil of a shooting star,  
that for its moment marks the vast of night).  
Without, there waits but deathly cold for us;  
within, the warmth of our companionship --  
aye, my hearties -- its spark will yet keep cold at bay  
(that yet will outwait every life that lives).  
So we shall live to see ours reach its end!  
Aye! This ice will melt and we

*angry chorus of refusal from -- unseen -- crew*

What, you would not go with me? *laughing*

*roar of refusal from -- unseen -- crew*

We shall see about that my hearties, we shall see.  
I am yet the captain of this ship, and you  
are yet the members of my crew. And I --  
when we will treat of this tomorrow -- I will  
with all due care and respect listen  
to you, and you, with all respect I ask  
listen to me. For if, if I can get you to  
listen to me, then I, with me, will keep you.

*unconvinced murmuring from crew as Walton takes on role of the Prologue*

And as we come to this, our respite's end  
hark well, my hearties, with all due patience --  
your minds at rest to learningly attend  
to ends, not means, of this our feeble science  
and untutored art. We are, even at our best,  
a shadow of our ambition for our selves.  
The truth in what we've made, were that confessed,  
is but a spark beside a sun that delves  
apart the dark with blinding light, and yet,  
if in your eyes that spark sparks light  
then that becomes the spark of light that set  
afire a light of truth of lasting might.  
If in the end we are to die, then why  
not reckless live to seize and hold a high  
ambition -- achieved or not but yet pursued  
to ground until for worms we make the food?  
Our guest, returned from Ingolstadt, now home --  
brought back by news of his young brother's murder --  
he knows, knows the truth -- it was, it was  
the vengeful progeny he made that in  
a frenzy, hearing the boy say the fam'ly's name --  
when in its erring in a wood it did  
surprise upon him -- killed the child.  
And Victor he keeps silent out of shame,  
shamelessly not lifting a finger to prevent  
the law from condemning an innocent to death.

*The -- unseen -- crew settles down to attend to the playing of Victor's story, as Walton dons robes take up his role as a judge in the courtroom represented in the adjunct area, as Hopkins, Winslow and Victor also get ready to step into their roles.*



**HOPKINS** *with Winslow and Victor*

No, better you stood here I think,  
so once the judge instructs the jury,  
you move across to here and turn to him,  
yet also thus address the jury and  
our hearties there -- while all the while, you oil  
and gesture with your panoply of lawyer's wiles  
against the pris'ner in the box that's there.

**WINSLOW** *with Hopkins and Victor*

No, for we agreed, all the while we practiced it  
that I would first, beginning here address

**VICTOR** *with Winslow and Hopkins*

No, he's right; I think it would be best

**HOPKINS** *with Winslow and Victor*

Aye, do it like I say, you'll see  
that it will work much better than before.

**WINSLOW** *with Hopkins and Victor*

Hopkins, you forget you are a seaman  
and I the sailing master on this ship?

**HOPKINS** *with Winslow and Victor*

Sir. Aye, aye sir. I did not... I did forget.

**VICTOR** *to Walton and Hopkins and Winslow*

Yes, and do you forget too that I am Victor,  
who brought to life the creature that still  
you laugh at like such daring fools and now

**HOPKINS**

Oh, no sir. No. I did not... I did forget.

**WALTON** *laughing*

Enough. Now you are Victor, again,  
in the glory of your youth, and he  
is now your true and dearest friend,  
Henry Clerval

**VICTOR** *interrupting, and to himself*

(who with such strong, honest devotion  
so often tried to save me with  
his loyal, caring friendship -- all to no avail.)

**WALTON**

and all these others too who played their part --

as if our life passing before us brought  
so vivid back to mind all those who played --  
played...played their part in this the story  
that you told us brought you here to our ship,  
they too we'll put before your eyes -- oh aey!,  
my hearties, aey? -- in our imaginings'  
bright light.

**WINSLOW** *laughing, with Hopkins and Victor, and addressing Victor first,  
then Hopkins*

Aye, well I for one, am glad you are  
who indeed you are, not so, Sir --  
but think on it twice if such a fine thing  
it would be if but plumed up in finery  
as this at will we could recast the selves  
we have all accustomed to and play  
a diff'rent part as if it were, so naturally,  
our own? Would that not make mees of yous,  
and topsyturvy up the world by making those  
who rule the ruled?

**HOPKINS** *laughing, with Winslow and Victor*  
Aye, for the habits we endoss are all,  
all take us for, and changing them we change,  
if not ourselves, then the self all take us for

**VICTOR** *interrupting, and to himself*  
(that we could have so easily become  
had we our lives to live again).

**WINSLOW** *with Hopkins and Victor*  
I beg your pardon, Sir. We did not hear you.

**VICTOR** *with Winslow and Hopkins*  
Nothing -- we were speaking of our parts.

**HOPKINS** *laughing, to Winslow*  
Yes. So we should change, to test if true that in  
the raiment of a role and treated so,  
we might our fortune and our selves upend.  
So you and I, Sir; here, I the prosecutor,  
and you his friend, Clerval, could be.

**WINSLOW** *laughing, with Hopkins and Victor*  
I, the handsome youth? And you the angry, old,  
vindictive scourge intent on making someone  
take the blame and hang at any cost?  
No. I would, but dare not for I am too old.

For that, no slight of habit nor of finery  
will trick the sculpting done by hands of time  
and supple us to selves we're not and none  
would ever take us for but fools.

**VICTOR** *laughing, with Winslow and Hopkins*

Does not the world take what we show it --  
if accustomed to it -- as right and true?  
Look how secrets known to selves, kept silently  
keep fools so fooled that how it seems is how  
to them, kept ignorant, it must then be.  
And is that not the rule that keeps us fools  
so ruled by lies that silent are kept hid?  
It's said there is much truth abroad in this  
wide world; is it that learned so well to keep  
itself well hid, or we who learned so well  
to keep it from ourselves, keeping it unseen?

**WINSLOW**

Belay your jabbering, and stand. In all  
the majesty and awe of justice, comes the judge --  
as so must you, gentlemen of the jury.

**CABIN BOY** *heard from off with drum roll*

Hear ye, hear ye, this court is now assized,  
and called to order by the laws that vest

*disorderly muttering from -- unseen -- crew*

**WALTON** *as a judge, and glaring the -- unseen -- crew to silence, and  
addressing them as a jury*

Gentlemen of the jury, this court is now  
assized to hear the pleading of the case  
that yours is to judge as to  
the matter of one fact -- that did, or not  
the prisoner commit the crime that here  
she stands accused of having done.  
Conduct the prisoner to the box  
and the witness to her place.

*Margaret, as Justine, and Elizabeth come on to adjunct space.*

**WINSLOW** *as a prosecutor*

May it please the court, for herefor we are here

**WALTON** *as a judge*

The wherefores we are here for, Sir, we all  
already know. Were a preamble needed

to open these proceedings, then, why, it would  
be mine to give, not so?

**WINSLOW** *as a prosecutor*

Aye, aye, Sir, but may it please your Grace

**WALTON** *as a judge*

Your duty, Sir, is not to ingratiate  
yourself to me. Yours is to present the case  
that stands against the prisoner, innocent

*dismissive murmurings from -- unseen -- crew, as a jury*

innocent, I say, until you may remove  
within the minds of you her peers beyond  
all doubt that can be reasonably held  
the shield that is fair guiltlessness,  
that holds at bay base passion to condemn.  
For your part is to show beyond sound doubt,  
and yours is to hew to innocence presumed,  
and mine to vigil o'er due process under law.  
For these, like rudder, hull and sails -- the force  
of each agrappling 'gainst the others -- keeps  
the worthy ship of lawful rule acoursing true  
and safe at sea. Together they prevent  
abuse of power by the state. The due,  
deliberate proceeding under law,  
as unseen lines perspective guide, ensures  
the mind's eye in just magnitude relates  
the elements of the depiction's panoply,  
and draws to limning light for reason's open gaze  
what angry passion would in dark enclose.  
The case you make in open court, that free  
to challenge by all countering truths, it is  
the gage that justice rests on what is rightly known.  
And innocence' presumption the bulwark is  
that like the sound-ribbed hull that holds at bay  
injustice' seething ocean, walls away  
the surge of rabble's passion to assign  
the part of sacrificial victim to  
any innocent at hand to expiate  
their anger at injustice' seething sway.  
So you then in your minds you must so much  
more than presume, but take as proved -- absent  
clear contrary proof -- her innocence.  
For guilt it does not loom behind a screen  
of mere formality of innocence,

but is the fact that must beyond all doubt  
be held before the forefront of the mind  
and kept there squarely til it may be proved  
it's not, by evidence and reason free  
and fairly brought to light before this bench  
where reason rules.

*murmurings from -- unseen -- crew, as a jury*

**WALTON** *as a judge*  
State your name.

**MARGARET** *as Justine*  
Justine Moritz.

**WALTON** *as a judge*  
And you were a servant and companion in the household that

**MARGARET** *as Justine*  
I was...I am...

**WALTON** *as a judge*  
And you understand you are here accused of the murder of the child, William?

**MARGARET** *as Justine*  
I understand.

**WALTON** *as a judge*  
And how do you plead?

**MARGARET** *as Justine*  
I plead...I plead... *she faints*

*uproar from -- unseen -- crew, as a jury, as Elizabeth, Victor and Hopkins, as  
Clerval, go to help Justine*

**WINSLOW** *as a prosecutor*  
Aha! Look ye. By their actions ye shall know them,  
and look how does remorse and conscience crush  
her now under the guilt of her heinous crime.

**VICTOR**  
(I know that she is innocent. I do.)

**ELIZABETH**  
(How? Then say so. I too cannot believe she killed him -- why? But...)

**VICTOR** *to himself*  
[I cannot, for I would not be believed.]

No common sense of evidence could fathom  
what I've made and know did this.]

**HOPKINS** *as Clerval*

(We must help her, and us, and cast about  
for other, unknown, facts and circumstance  
that may, in truth, this tragedy explain.)

**ELIZABETH**

(What other? Everything stands against her.  
We know, oh God!, the child is dead. Oh!)

**MARGARET** *as Justine, reviving*

(I did not, did not, did not do this thing.)

**ELIZABETH**

(Then who? For if not you then...then you, and why?  
What do you know, Victor, what do you know?)

**HOPKINS** *as Clerval*

(Oh my poor Victor, your face in pain  
bespeaks your horror at your brother's loss.)

**ELIZABETH**

(I look at her and feel I know...know...  
but all facts coldly deny it...and, Victor...?  
The truth I feel is not the truth I know.  
Facts rightly known do rightly crush all intuition?)

**WALTON** *as a judge*

Is she able now, to speak and understand?  
For she is here to be tried, and if she can,  
the duty of this court is to proceed.

**MARGARET** *as Justine*

Leave me; I can stand. Incomprehension is  
the weight that crump and huddles me to ground.  
How does misfortune come and so quick consume  
the richness of our lives to ashes that I  
know not, nor do you. But now to me  
this accusation, like a fire in the night  
did set ablaze the palace of my life --  
so filled with trust and happiness and peace,  
that humbly yes, outshone all riches --  
and now's a ruin stark and empty in dawn's  
grey light, of charred remains and buckling stones.  
I loved that child as if my own,  
and thought by giving him the mastery

of me -- all my tenderness and time --  
a constant, so attentive servant to his whims  
of mind and change of moods as he ran learning  
through the world, he'd always feel  
esteemed and fully understood. And thus  
I might repay his mother's kindness, who  
did take me in to serve her noble house,  
and learn -- as I could not dream that I could do --  
I, a wretched child of violence insensate  
in poverty's rude, brutal truncating of men.

**WINSLOW** *as a prosecutor*

Insensate baseness never does let go!  
Can you not see? Her having no child of her own  
a sudden, when alone, unseen, with him  
did spark in darkness in the wood her hate,  
and so in jealousy she killed him quick  
to venge herself against the noble master's hand  
that fed and sheltered, taught and tamed her,  
by strangling him that she loved most.

*vindictive howl from -- unseen -- crew, as a jury*

**WALTON** *as a judge*

Silence! What evidence is there for that?

**WINSLOW** *s a prosecutor*

The night the child was killed did she not sleep --  
or what? -- for she was elsewhere than at home?  
Is that not so? Is that not so I ask?

**ELIZABETH**

No..yes..we all went searching for the child,  
as did she, at first so eager, but no..she wouldn't...

**WINSLOW** *as a prosecutor*

Oh, no?

Who does know what darkness reaches deep  
and ever lurks asleep in every heart?  
She suffered -- violence and humiliation --  
and was mastered. She suffered; she has said so,  
and vengeance is ever born of suffering.  
It waits, nurturing its wound, so patient to  
outlash and strike, a roiling emutinery  
of raging hate seized upon its victim;  
and thus she sudden killed the child, to spite  
the noble one who taught her with such kind,  
greatehearted grace and human sympathy.

And here, now for the loss of him who was  
so loved -- the suffering she to us has caused --  
now comes her time to die and pay.

*approval heard from -- unseen -- crew, as a jury*

**WALTON** *as a judge*

Justice not vengeance is the duty of this court.  
The mother she was long dead, not so?  
Against the dead what vengeance can be had?

**WINSLOW** *as a prosecutor*

In memory the hated dead they so remain  
as if alive.

**WALTON** *as a judge*

Yet vengeance visited  
upon another in their place touches them not.

**WINSLOW** *as a prosecutor*

No matter, for we are living and to  
our righteous anger someone must respond.

*approval heard from -- unseen -- crew, as a jury*

**WINSLOW** *as a prosecutor*

Is it not written, the pain of the penalty  
must fit the crime? So blood for blood  
must here be paid to expiate  
this killing so senseless and so vile  
for so the laws of order, man and God require!

**HOPKINS** *as Clerval*

But not by her! Vengeance for what?  
For she was never wronged.  
The mother loved her so.  
That I saw and know is so.

**WINSLOW** *as a prosecutor*

I object! Who is he to speak without  
the leave of due procedure of this court?

**WALTON** *as a judge*

Objection sustained.  
Return then to your place and keep your peace.

**WINSLOW** *as a prosecutor*

May I remind this court and jury that



for murder such as this the law demands  
an equal penalty and that is death.

**WALTON** *as a judge*

First the law requires proof for any crime.

**WINSLOW** *as prosecutor*

And proof is what I have. Mark well,  
for proof is what I have. Do you, you see  
this locket?

**MARGARET** *as Justine*

Yes.

**WINSLOW** *as a prosecutor*

And it was found? This locket, I ask you  
whose was it and with whose likeness on it?

**ELIZABETH**

It was the child's and ever worn by him,  
a token of his mother's memory and love.

**WINSLOW** *as a prosecutor*

And it was found? Aey?

**MARGARET** *as Justine*

Its strands closed in my hand at break of dawn  
the night the child was killed.

**WINSLOW** *as a prosecutor*

Thus she does confess her crime!

*roar heard from -- unseen -- crew, as a jury*

**MARGARET** *as Justine*

No! I know not how it came there.

**WINSLOW** *as a prosecutor*

Oh no, you would not know, lest you recall,  
you, so fiercely in the pale light of the moon  
so deep in shadow by the rustling trees  
alone with him your dearest charge, unseen  
by any mastering authority --  
and mutinous resentment welling from within,  
you clasped your hands around the stemtop of  
his neck and eked out from the flower of  
his questioning face, the bloom of life in him.

*mutterings of "guilty," guilty," "condemn her," etc. from -- unseen -- crew, as a jury*

**WALTON** *as a judge*

Was there a moon that night? Is that a fact?

**WINSLOW** *as a prosecutor*

No matter, for she killed him. How else could she have taken this locket from his neck? -- a token of her triumph over her that was her master, the hapless mother pictured here of the child so innocent, so cruelly killed by this woman there. My case it rests with your sound judgment and sense of honest duty, clear as it is.

*cries of "guilty," guilty," "she must die," etc. from -- unseen -- crew, as a jury*

**WALTON** *as a judge*

Silence! Who here would speak for the accused? So you must then speak for yourself, not so?

**MARGARET** *as Justine*

You have decided, and I speak not to change your minds. From what you know, you know what seems, and so the reasoning you make it has the certainty you feel that it is right. But I know that it is wrong -- but why would you believe me, now your facts all stand against me? When one knows what is true, but many no, only time, with luck, reveals what's truly so. Misfortune, guised in this lie has come to me. Yes so it has, and I will bear this fate open as my arms, unarmed, that never harmed, and now take up this unjust death as I'd take up the child I loved as if my own. By all suspected of this crime what life is left for me in the society of you who are my life, should I now go free? Alone, for sake of truth, I'll say what's true. The evening Elizabeth, desperate, returning with his brother saying they had playing swirled apart by happenstance until each found he'd lost the other and now William remained astray, I left the house -- not yet in any agony of fear for I thought of my joy at finding him, comforting him and being gazed on thankfully by all who feared for him. But as the night

wore on and I despaired of finding him,  
despite my search, ever more anxious -- so prey,  
I too became to worst of fears for him.  
Exhausted spent, I stumbled on a stable by  
the wood where he was later found, and there  
where horses' hay was stored I fell to sleep,  
and woke to find the locket he had round his neck  
laced about my fingers hanging from my hand.

**WINSLOW** *as a prosecutor*

Whence like a line, fouling, snarling on your wrist  
you wrenched it at the instant after death.

**MARGARET** *as Justine*

No, no, and no! No!  
I beg you ask yourselves if you are wrong!

*murmurings from jury*

**WINSLOW** *as a prosecutor*

Take care, the lying whore would question what  
you know, and take you all for weakling fools.

*cries of "guilty," guilty," "she must die," etc. from -- unseen -- crew, as a jury*

**WALTON** *as a judge*

Your rush to judgement does diminish both  
yourselves and justice's ideal of rights.  
Now, your sentiments you know, but yet  
you must deliberate unbiased once you  
have heard the pleading the accused does make.  
For someone here must speak for her...  
(for I cannot. Though calm and beauty such as hers  
so still bespeak what floods of speech could not.)  
Who here would speak to advocate her cause?

*Hopkins, as Clerval, and Elizabeth turn to each other in mutual expectation,  
and to Victor, who is ever more agitated, twisting and turning, muttering to  
himself.*

**MARGARET** *as Justine*

Are the're none here would stand and speak for me?  
You, who have long known me, lived with me,  
and made me one in your society,  
do you not know what I would do and no,  
not ever do?

**VICTOR** *to himself*

(Had I the courage I now should, I'd speak --  
I know it was the progeny I've made  
did this to me. But bootless it would be  
for I'd not be believed and would be shamed  
so dire is the horror I have made.)

**MARGARET** *as Justine*

When I awoke and found her likeness here,  
shifting in my hand before my waking eyes --  
my joy! my joy at how she must have blessed me!  
For I thought I must have found him...oh but then  
I recalled how I half dreamt the horses, fitful, stirring,  
as if a towering malevolence,  
muffled, one with the dark, had breathed upon us.

*Victor runs off.*

**ELIZABETH**

Victor!

**HOPKINS** *as Clerval*

(Oh let him go and understand the why --  
he runs away beset by anger and  
by sorrow at the murder of his brother.)

**ELIZABETH**

(And you are sure there's not something more?)

**HOPKINS** *as Clerval*

(What?) And I will speak for you. I will.  
No more, no! For I would take your place  
and have them take, aye take, my life for yours.  
I know that you are innocent for I  
have known you over time and watched you well,  
and trust my heart to see the heart within.

*uproar from -- unseen -- crew, as a jury*

**HOPKINS** *as Clerval*

Aye, so it is. If one crime's blood calls for  
another, why not visit vengeance' terror  
on one who'll choose to kneel inside the noose  
of the circling, seething crowd and bare his back  
to the rain of stones heaved from their hands?  
So you a judge in raiment made to awe  
send me beneath the priestly executioner's  
high glinting and beheading, sacrificial knife.

Have my blood slake their thirst for solace,  
washing away all pain of this child's death.

**WALTON** *as a judge*

No! No! No! The law it cannot separate  
the criminal from the crime, the actor from the act.

**WINSLOW** *as a prosecutor*

So must condemn the one accused  
as law requires by light of facts brought here  
before this court. And that is that.

*uproar from -- unseen -- crew, as a jury*

**WALTON** *as a judge*

Silence! You will retire, deliberate,  
in calm sequestered, to then return to state  
your verdict, considered and well-founded, in this case.

**WINSLOW** *as a prosecutor*

And you the sentence then will state as you,  
your duty and the law

**WALTON** *as a judge*

See fit! My duty, Sir, I will do  
with no prompting from any, nor from you.

*Drum roll from cabin boy from off, as all go off. Victor comes on.*

**VICTOR**

I ran away. I ran away. I ran away.  
And ran, to live forlorn and desperate,  
by turns dejected by my cowardice,  
or elated by my fury for I knew  
that now I lived only to find it,  
and bring it to its death with mine.  
Returning to my father's house I kept  
my secret and my guilt so silent that  
in cradling of time they soon became  
so like accustomed, crippl'ing disability,  
accompanying me, without an instant's respite --  
but known only to me. My state of disengagement,  
they in their kindness all forebore,  
calling it my melancholy at  
the loss of my young brother, whom I hardly knew.  
Indifferent, I gave in to lure of happiness  
and agreed to marriage to Elizabeth  
as had been my mother's wish for us.

For most of all I missed my dearest friend,  
Clerval, who never lost his faith in me,  
and loved me, I know, all along in all  
the ardor and the brightness of  
our childhood's first and fast best friends.  
His studies took him far away, to learned,  
professional achievement -- and I was jealous,  
and oh I missed him -- but days and nights I spent  
afoot and coursing woods and mountains, sure,  
so watchful that one day I'd find it --  
always taking Clerval's letters with me,  
in lonely shepherd's camps and bivouacs,  
to read like an unfolding of love's treasures --  
but yet, even to him I could not confess  
the beast I had created. And then one day,  
so empty pensive, standing in a skree  
above the treeline by a glacier below,  
and taking in vast Nature's craggy glory there,  
there in the sun-lit cold I saw  
a figure loping dark across the ice,  
upright, but so unlike a human one.  
With welling tears and clench of triumph then  
I knew the moment now had come and I,  
careen and scrambling down the slope and stones,  
did lunge toward it in abandon now.  
And panting, running tangent to its stride  
across the roughness of the ice, I crossed  
into its path -- it must have known, and sensed  
my coming, for it veered to me to lead  
me on -- and soon I closed and I threw myself  
and was upon it grappling it to ground.

*Hopkins, as the Demon, has come on.*

**HOPKINS** *as the Demon*

Hah! Hah! And so you would it would be you  
who would catch me? You cruel fool, it should  
be me to howl and catch and kill you now!

**VICTOR**

At last I have you!

**HOPKINS** *as the Demon*

At last, well met. At last I can beg you  
to make another one like me for me  
to love and to love me.

**VICTOR**

No! Never. My brother whom you killed...oh!

**HOPKINS** *as the Demon*

My rage at your betrayal siezes me  
beyond my power to stop and hold it back.

**VICTOR**

And I for that have vowed to end your life.

**HOPKINS** *as the Demon*

As you began it? Careless and unthinking?  
Fixed only on the glory of your genius for creation?  
No. No. It is I who should kill you.  
But I will spare you. For I beg you, need you --  
make another like me for my own,  
so I'll not have to live my life alone.

**VICTOR**

No, you are a misambition that I'll not  
repeat again.

**HOPKINS** *as the Demon*

Oh, no? Then it is I who should kill you.  
And could so easily if I dispaired  
of my last hope -- so I will spare you --  
and beg you, beg you, as you hear and see me now,  
as if in prayer, make another for to cleave  
to me and to depend on me for I  
cannot go on so free. Wait. Wait.  
Listen to me. And bring your heart  
to understand before you bring your mind  
to bring your lips to speak. I beg you,  
I beg you, I beg you come with me  
and make another one of me.

**VICTOR**

I followed it to its rough lair in  
the snow and stones. And heard the story of  
its brave travails -- the books it found,  
my notebook that it kept, the fearful,  
sustained confronting of feral violence,  
so fathomless, at every turn when human ones  
came close, and of its struggle in  
insistent ardor and resolve to teach  
itself to speak, to conquer language and  
to learn. For its suffering, I pitied it.  
Or did its prostrations at my feet, its desperate burblings that it

would always be my faithful, loyal slave,  
its looking up to me clutching my knees  
as if tearful incense from its eyes might sway  
me heed it -- did that not engorge my heart  
with pride that I called proudly, pity?  
But I agreed to make another like it.  
The joy of reaching peace between us,  
of reconciling all my dread  
at making another and unleashing it,  
with all its desperate desire for  
a complementing other, lasted not long.  
I, beset by second thoughts, kept putting off  
beginning, and its mistrust and anger grew,  
until, fearing that in rage and fury it  
would kill me to avenge my treachery in this,  
I ran away, promising I had to find the means  
to make the other like itself. It knew  
I lied, and let me go for it now fixed  
to kill my wife and friend to force through fear  
my doing what it would I do that I  
now swore ever stronger I would not.  
The time went by, I lived accustomed to the threat.  
At last, my wedding day, that I could not  
in conscience any more delay, did come;  
I did my best to feign great happiness,  
as bride and relatives expect, but I,  
in truth, did fear the worst, and so it was.  
The marriage and the feast concluded, and adieus  
all said, they set us off upon a boat  
to cross the lake to reach the villa that  
my father in his generosity and hope  
portioned to us in mem'ry of his wife  
and what once had been their love and love for me.  
The oars like silvery, leaping fishes in  
the moonlight dipped and sprang, and trailed  
their pearls of rustling droplets that did lull  
the bluntness of the oarsmens' levering  
the boat aslide the water past the glow  
in casement windows from the palaces on shore.  
What was I to say to her whose trust and love  
for me, I had accepted and was now  
in silence leading to disaster and to death?  
Hand in hand beside her, her laughter and  
her perfume suffocating me, I saw only  
the stars so far and free beyond the granite  
prison towers of snow-dappled mountain crags.  
Prepared for our wedding bed she said to me,



*Hopkins, as the Demon, has gone off, and Elizabeth, in adjunct area, has come on.*

**ELIZABETH**

My love, how long have I longed for this, for I have always loved you -- it was I who asked your mother -- bless her memory -- to make her dying wish that we should thus be one, and you should take, and make me grave with child.

**VICTOR**

Yes. Yes. I did not know.

**ELIZABETH**

And that is all?...Then say no more, as I would bring my lips to seal my love with yours.

**VICTOR**

This is an unfamiliar place and danger I sense may lie in waiting here. Where are my pistols and are they primed? The doors and locks to all this house I'll first ascertain and in a moment to you I'll come back.

**ELIZABETH**

What troubles you, my love? Something amiss for long has always seemed

**VICTOR**

The window there must have its shutters battened for

**ELIZABETH**

Oh, no. For I would have the risen moon shed its pale shafts into the room, and sing to me as if a light that opens to wide freedom of a world of happiness for me anew.

**VICTOR**

Yes, I see. And in a moment will return.

**ELIZABETH**

I wait, as long I have, with only thoughts of you.

**VICTOR**

And pistols at hand I went -- and knew that it was there in wait, hidden, gathering to strike.

The rounds of all the house I made -- but nothing there.  
And then I heard the howling laugh and knew,  
and racing up the stairs into the room  
I sickened as it loomed over the bed --  
too late -- so agile to the window it leapt back,  
and taunting me beneath its cowl and cape  
the shadow of its shape so dark cut out  
against the light, it crouched upon  
the window ledge, and sprang into the night.  
Twice I fired but tears of rage clouded my eyes.  
I knelt to weep where it had left her dead.

**THE DEMON** *momentarily emerging from hiding and seen and heard only by  
the members of the audience*

I killed her, yes, though she was innocent,  
for he dishonored me and broke the promise  
that he made, and I would bring such terror  
to his life that he would keep the vow he made --  
so solemn swore he'd keep his faith with me,  
and try at least to make another of my kind.  
What right have they to peace and love  
who know not all the suffering they bring?

*returns to hiding*

**VICTOR**

From that time on I cursed the world and thought,  
and only thought of finding it and taking my  
just revenge. Before I chased full  
across the Earth -- unto the bleakness of  
the ice fields of the northern pole that brought  
me to this ship, it also killed Clerval.  
And it waits here hidden and you know it not,  
and would waste your time with shows and plays!  
Oh!

*murmuring of surprise from -- unseen -- crew*

**WINSLOW**

Sir, you forget yourself and what we pacted.

**VICTOR**

Do you not see? It's here, aboard your ship,  
and lies in wait, and must be killed! Believe me, please...

**WALTON**

Avast! What siezes you to thus abandon  
all we repeated for this telling of your tale

for the refreshment from their weariness  
of my proud hearties, members of my crew,  
now readying to gird again the will  
with sword of action and prepare  
assault on new endeavor. Aey?

*growling of dissent from -- unseen -- crew*

No matter. No matter. It is not yet the time.  
(For who would return defeated troops  
to battle-ready first of all must learn  
the time to give to time. For minist'ring  
to healing it begins with sensing where  
in wane to perigee that at its moment  
turns to climb to fullness there anew  
does stand the inconstant arc, re-arc of fortune's wheel  
that yet does for all that lives eternally return.)  
We shall see, my hearties, we shall see.

*murmuring of dissent from -- unseen -- crew*

**VICTOR**

Captain, valiant captain, do you not see?  
Excess of courage brings the stubborn brave  
to early graves. And now we must throw off  
this useless playing of my tale, and search  
until we find my hideous progeny on this ship  
so I may kill it and then die in peace!

*roar of dissatisfaction from -- unseen -- crew*

**WALTON**

Silence! We will finish what we have begun.

**WINSLOW**

And you shall like, in silence, what you see  
or the lashes' knots will drink their weight  
at the bleeding on your backs.

**WALTON**

Mister Winslow, see to another round of grog for all,  
as we put back the playing of our guest's sad tale.  
Aye, my hearties, aye, all in its time  
to fullness comes to pass -- and at that time,  
I'll do my best to enthrall you to my will.  
Hopkins!

## **HOPKINS**

Sir!

## **WALTON**

There, on a stony beach on Ireland's shore,  
where ceaseless breakers roil and sand  
the shifting stones to rounded loaves,  
Victor, having heard his demon progeny  
that way had passed, with all the strength  
of the possessed had rowed across the strait  
from England and has just landed his boat.  
And following him, sent by Victor's father,  
to return the son careening -- prodigal --  
across the Earth, so mad in chase of some  
demonic vision, comes his friend, Clerval.  
Clerval now reached those distant islands west,  
just as Victor set off for Ireland's eastern rim,  
and without the strength of one possessed --  
so stalwart to duty at prudence' expense --  
he too set off across the strait to reach his friend.  
Spent by struggle 'gainst the unfamiliar sea,  
he was too weak to breach the surf and land  
his boat that churn and tide they ground and cracked  
on reefstones near the beach. Victor, seeing  
a person drowning off the shore -- and knowing not  
it was his childhood friend, Clerval -- for once,  
unthinking, threw himself into the water's cold  
to save the person flailing in the curls of spume.  
An oh, the strangeness of their joy, united,  
when in surprise each recognized the other,  
embracing in the violent, surrounding sea.

## **VICTOR**

Oh would I have succumbed with him, and stayed  
under the battering of the waves  
to drown and not and have lifted him ashore  
to see the horror of his death.

## **WALTON**

His tossing from the boat had hurled him  
against it at his back, and dragged ashore  
both found the movement in his legs was gone.  
Clerval he knew it was his end, so gave out  
his message to his friend...Hopkins!

**HOPKINS** *going to adjunct area to play Clerval speaking to Victor, though Victor, agitated and distraught, remains in cabin refusing to continue playing*

*his story*

Aye, aye Sir! ...

Return in peace, my dearest friend,  
home to your father's house, and remember ever  
my love for you, from now to when we played  
as children in the sun, you as Oliver the brave  
and faithful friend, and I as Roland at the pass,  
my Durandal in song, red-tinted in my right  
against the horde until we both did die  
the death of soldiers fighting, brave and true.

**WALTON**

And Victor turns to run and fetch him help  
from fishermen who live along the beach, and then  
the demon quick descending from the cliff  
in a triceling clammers down and kills the man.  
And Victor he returns and finds Clerval  
the neck snapped near asunder from the chest.

**VICTOR**

Oh.....so it was, was...

**WALTON**

Come here, to pull him from the sea and play

**VICTOR**

No! I would not, cannot, will not, no...

*Hopkins has gone back to cabin and brings a drink to Victor.*

**HOPKINS**

Good Sir, take this and drink -- a wee dram  
to lift your spirits from your sorrowing,  
return your strength and spur you to take up  
again our playing here of your misfortune.

**VICTOR**

Sweet lad, your kindness so unthinking  
gestures deep, should balm my wounded heart --  
but no kindness can transfrom the bleak,  
cold reach of my world of shameful woe.

**WALTON**

When you are ready then, begin here to pull him from the sea

**VICTOR**

No! I would not, cannot, will not, no...

**WALTON**

That is what we agreed to do and you

**VICTOR**

No! You understand nothing!

**WALTON**

Sir, I would have my orders met.

*rising murmur from -- unseen -- crew*

**VICTOR**

No! I cannot bear to play that end again.

For I'll have not yet killed it.

**WALTON**

Then what? I'll play your part too? Hopkins!

**HOPKINS**

Ready, Sir.

**VICTOR**

No!

*more remonstrations from -- unseen -- crew*

**WALTON**

Silence. Well then, we will move to play the end.

**VICTOR**

Why? I tell you, it is here! And you  
do dare to taunt it with the mocking of my fate?  
For I too well do know the end, and now,  
must find and kill it here before it is too late.

**WALTON**

Yes then. To it. Now we will play the end --  
the end that brought you to this ship.  
How, beyond endurance, over all the Earth  
you followed it until at last, you say,  
in this cold hell of crushing ice it left  
aboard this ship with you? Not so, you say?  
And stealthed into this cabin with a notebook  
for to leave you in your sleep, not so?

**VICTOR**

To kill me, and you and all the rest, and you

**WALTON**

And how shall I know this demon when I see it?

**VICTOR**

Oh! I was sleeping here where you carried me.

**WALTON**

And I by candlelight here my wife did write,  
this cutlass, pistols close at hand  
as Winslow, you slept there in that chair  
barring the cabin passageway lest angry  
mutineers come take my life for leading them  
to hopeless, icy, fearful end, no end  
of words and playing to their self-regard  
can keep from ending in vengeful rage --  
and from the cold and dark exhaustion  
in deepest sleep upon my hands like you, I fell.

**WINSLOW**

But Sir, what if... *Walton dismisses objection with gesture.* Aye, Sir. ...  
Goodnight, Sir, and may we rest

**WALTON**

in peace. Not yet, not yet, I trust.

**HOPKINS**

And oh ... Thank you, Sirs ... I will from here be first to sieze what may

**WINSLOW**

may wake? And wake us from our sleep? Aye.

**WALTON**

Aye. Goodnight. And may nothing wake us from our sleep.

*Deep dark in cabin as Victor, Winslow and Hopkins sleep, and Walton writes by  
candlight, as Margaret comes on in adjunct space.*

**WALTON**

My bride -- beloved -- by you so blest,  
here all goes well. Until the end I did my best.  
And every breath I take until the last  
I take, thinking of you, holding me fast.

**MARGARET**

How long does love keep hope aflame?  
Past all reason, that all the same,  
knows it so badly ended. And all the best  
you were to me I recall and treasure lest

those we love forget. I'll live to very last  
witness to your good, in mourning, holding fast.

### **HOPKINS**

But Sir, Sir, if I may, why not...  
why don't we play the end? What of the part  
where the monstrous hideousness I play,  
this way, hidden like a frightened animal,  
crouching in a lean-to made for beasts  
against a house he came upon where lived  
a blind old man, De Lacey, his most beloved  
daughter, Agatha, and her loving husband,  
Felix, and the wild and ignorant progeny --  
like this, keeping itself hidden from their sight  
for many rich seasons of time did watch them and  
did learn -- from music made by the old man's hands,  
the poems read to them by the girl, the stories told,  
and teaching that they gave and love  
of children and of young for old and man and wife  
they in their happiness they showed.  
We practiced it to play tonight, and so I would --  
would play the progeny's learning that way --  
for I too would sometime learn like that.

### **WALTON**

Aye. You would learn like that. I too.  
Winslow, break out your guitar,  
for Hopkins here would play the end --  
and so would I.

*Mixed groans of uninterest and calls of approbation from -- unseen -- crew as  
Winslow, as De Lacey, with guitar, and Walton, as Felix, go to adjunct area; and  
Hopkins, as the Demon, goes to lean-to; and Victor sleeps in the bunk in cabin.*

### **WALTON**

Silence. Silence. We are not yet beaten  
by our exhaustion -- aey, my hearties?  
Yes, silence... that so cold buries in inaction --  
all, who must in time, forsake the hearth of acting.  
We are near done -- but then will begin again!  
Aey?

*Mutterings of dissension from -- unseen -- crew as, in adjunct area, Winslow  
plays guitar, as Walton, as Felix, and Margaret, as Agatha, sing.*

**WALTON** as Felix & **MARGARET** as Agatha -- singing, joined by the  
others



The strife of day now done  
to rest at last beginning  
love's solace newly begun  
takes wing in hearts strong willing.

Hearth fires that now ember  
sing soft the spent of days  
in notes that make remember  
the melody of kindly ways.

With sleep travail upend  
so come unto me revelling  
in old love's trusting wend  
that spurs to desire unending.

The care of love's bright fire  
lights the night of death's dark ire.

Ambition outwears the sheath  
that keeps its sword unharmed  
that once bared to action's seethe  
brooks no calm's disarming.

Oh weep well for who aroving  
in venture's gloire of fame  
forsakes how a home's aroving  
knits up love's lasting flame.

Without the world for vengeance  
ever stirs without recede;  
within with new resurgence  
love's laughter need not cede.

The care of love's small fire  
lights the night of death's dark ire.

*Margaret goes off, as Walton, Winslow, and Hopkins return to exactly where they were -- pistols and cutlass at hand etc. -- when the Demon first came on.*

### **WINSLOW**

I feel the unfamiliar darkness here  
does balm the rasping on my eyes and soul  
from insistent day and thrilling expectation  
of getting back to action, now so cruelly dashed.

### **HOPKINS** *speaking of Victor, asleep in bunk*

If, Sir, I might stay...in case he wakes and speaks...and madly raves, I might help, please Sir...

**WINSLOW**

Hopkins, it seems to me your place

**WALTON** *laughing*

May better be with us

**WINSLOW**

But Sir, what if... *Walton dismisses objection with gesture.* Aye, Sir. ...

Goodnight, Sir, and may we rest

**WALTON**

in peace. Not yet, not yet, I trust.

**HOPKINS**

And oh ... Thank you ... I will from here be first to sieze what may

**WINSLOW**

may wake? And wake us from our sleep? Aye.

**WALTON**

Aye. Goodnight. And may nothing wake us from our sleep.

*Deep dark in cabin as Victor, Winslow and Hopkins sleep, and Walton writes by candlelight and falls asleep. The Demon comes on.*

**THE DEMON**

Sleep, sleep, sweet sleep -- one more deep innocence  
my wretched and inhuman life denied me.

And I, I was left by you to learn alone.

The hideous progeny I am, is yours.

And now to darkness I will take

*In an instant of fierce, confused mayhem in the dark, the Demon strangles Victor waking Hopkins, as Walton and Winslow take up cutlass and pistols to fight the mutineers bursting in through the cabin door, and the Demon turns on Walton, who drives the cutlass into it as it strangles him among the mutineers, as Hopkins tries to help Walton, as Winslow and Hopkins then fight the mutineers and are killed by them.*

**HOPKINS**

Oh, Sir!