

Plays for Young Audiences

A PARTNERSHIP OF SEATTLE CHILDREN'S THEATRE AND CHILDREN'S THEATRE COMPANY-MINNEAPOLIS

2400 THIRD AVENUE SOUTH
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55404
612-872-5108
FAX 612-874-8119

Frankenstein

Story by
Mary Shelley

Adaptation by
Thomas Olson

Frankenstein was first presented by The Children's Theatre Company for the 1983-1984 season.

The license issued in connection with PYA perusal scripts is a limited license, and is issued for the sole purpose of reviewing the script for a potential future performance. All other rights regarding perusal scripts are expressly reserved by Plays for Young Audiences, including, but not limited to, the rights to distribute, perform, copy or alter scripts. This limited license does not convey any performance rights of any kind with this material. By accepting any perusal script(s), Licensee agrees to and is bound by these terms.

Characters:

Men

- Victor Frankenstein
- The Creature
- Henry Clerval
- Alphonse Frankenstein
- Professor Krempe
- Robert Walton
- Ernest Frankenstein
- William Frankenstein
- Monsieur De Lacey (Blind Peasant)
- Felix De Lacey (Peasant Son)
- Young Man
- Magistrate
- Explorers

Women

- Elizabeth Lavenza
- Caroline Frankenstein
- Justine Mortiz
- Agatha De Lacey (Peasant Daughter)
- Young Woman

Act I, Scene 1

The stage setting consists of two towers, one at each side of the stage, constructed of chrome-framed plexiglass covered with reflective, translucent Mylar, allowing controlled "bleed-through" into the tower boxes. The stage right tower contains a lower box [approximately 3 ½ feet high] which contains a diorama of an ice-bound early 19th century ship. Above it is a larger box which contains a "life-sized" representation of a bleak arctic landscape, about eight feet high and four feet deep.

The tower is on a turn-table and its opposite side contains a neutral box, shallower than the arctic landscape's, which has a large door which may be opened with a retractable staircase leading to a raised platform, semicircular in shape. The stage left tower is identical to the other, except that the bottom box contains no scenery, the upper box which corresponds to the arctic is neutral, except for an enlarged model of a heart which floats in a small box of plexiglass from the top of the box.

Upstage of the towers is a rear-projection screen. Downstage, extending over the orchestra pit, are beams which split the space into four "pits", the stage right one containing a winding staircase. Hanging above the stage from the proscenium are four lighting instruments: two metal domes, one which points down, one pointing at the audience; the third and fourth are crystal chandeliers, one of them covered with a white cloth as if in storage.

House lights fade. Dim light rises on the boxes; in the arctic landscape stands frozen WALTON, an arctic explorer; a wooden placard stand is in front of his box, as if it were an exhibition in an old museum. Stage left, the CREATURE stands, his hands crossed over his chest like a mummy, with the heart also dimly lit. Echoing footsteps draw near and a Victorian COUPLE with CHILD enter stage right and look at the arctic diorama and WALTON and remark in French. They proceed stage right and remark at the CREATURE, then exit. Wind rises and light increases on arctic box as snow begins to fall within it and WALTON suddenly "comes to life."

WALTON (Falling to his knees.) Shelter! Thank God - shelter from the storm!
(Calling to offstage right as BENNETT and TRENT enter.) Mr. Bennett,
Mr. Trent - we'll rest here.

BENNETT Heaven help us, fools that we are; we never should have left the
ship! We're going to die out here.

WALTON (Consulting a map.) We should give thanks, Mr. Bennett, for having
found as much as this ridge to stave off the wind. It is a sort of
refuge.

BENNETT "Refuge"?! This, sir -this is our grave!

WALTON Enough! Now you listen to me, the both of you -we shall survive this storm, we shall find our way back to the ship, the sun will release her from the ice, and. . .

BENNETT And then what, Captain? Then shall we sail back home to England?

WALTON You know very well that I am resolved to sail across this polar sea!

BENNETT How?! There is no passage! What is it, Captain -the snow, or just your bloody ambition that has blinded you?!

FRANKENSTEIN *(An anguished cry, offstage but near.)* Au secours. . . oh, juste ciel...!

WALTON, BENNETT, and TRENT freeze at the sound, listening.

FRANKENSTEIN *(Nearer.)* Sacre ciel . . . aide moi!

TRENT French?! Captain Walton, there's someone talkin' French!

FRANKENSTEIN *(Just outside the box.)* Henry! Henry Clerval!

EXPOLRERS look offstage right and gasp in astonishment.

BENNETT Well, I'll be damned; it's a...

WALTON A man! Good God! *(WALTON moves to stage right and begins to pull FRANKENSTEIN into the box.)* Help me with him, the poor soul. *(BENNETT and TRENT assist in pulling FRANKENSTEIN into the box.)*

FRANKENSTEIN *(Screaming in agony.)* Ahhh! Mes jambes!

WALTON Careful; His legs seem to be broken.

BENNETT Frozen, more likely. Where could he have come from, Captain?

WALTON Heaven knows. Mr. Trent - the brandy - quickly!

BENNETT But clearly the man's about to die; why waste...

FRANKENSTEIN *(Rising up on his elbow, suddenly.)* "Die?!" No! I will not die, do you hear? You must help me! I must not die, not until. . .

WALTON There, there. . . calm yourself. Of course you're not going to die; I'll see to that.

WALTON gives FRANKENSTIEN a sip of brandy from the flask.

TRENT (*As FRANKENSTEIN drinks.*) At least he speaks English; that's lucky, ain't it?

FRANKENSTEIN (*Reaching toward TRENT's face.*) I cannot see you... I am blind...!

BENNETT From the glare of the snow.

WALTON Never mind; your sight may return in time.

FRANKENSTEIN It won't. I know such things. I am a doctor.

TRENT A doctor?!

WALTON I... I had assumed you were an explorer, sir, like us.

FRANKENSTEIN An explorer? Yes. You could say I was a sort of explorer. . . once. But now I am only a hunter.

BENNETT But there ain't nothin' to hunt this far north.

FRANKENSTEIN There is!

WALTON What, sir? What do you hunt?

FRANKENSTEIN One who flees from me!

WALTON (*To BENNETT and TRENT.*) The man?! (*To FRANKENSTEIN*) A man, sir?

FRANKENSTEIN No! A monster! A fiend!

BENNETT Bloody hell – the doctor's mad!

WALTON Damn you, Bennett - will you hold your tongue! (*To FRANKENSTEIN.*) Tell me, sir, please -who are you? I am Captain Robert Walton.

FRANKENSTEIN My name is Frankenstein. Victor Frankenstein.

WALTON You called out a name earlier : "Henry." Is he the fiend you seek?

FRANKENSTEIN No. No. Henry was my friend. But. . . he is gone now. He and the rest. . . Oh, dear God. . . (*Weeping.*) I never meant to cause harm! Oh, please, you must believe me!

WALTON Of course I believe. . .

FRANKENSTEIN You don't! How could you? You don't know!

WALTON Then tell me. Tell us. . . tell us about Henry.

FRANKENSTEIN Yes. If you knew, then you might help me. I must have your help. And then I could die in peace. . . like mother . . .

WALTON Don't speak of death, please, sir...

FRANKENSTEIN But that is all there is to my story. So long ago, it seems. . . but I remember. Mother was the first to die. . . .

Act I, Scene 2

Lights begin to dim on arctic box, but maintain a low reading throughout the following scene. ALPHONSE and VICTOR, dressed in mourning, enter from upstage and slowly walk center and down toward the orchestra pit. They are followed gradually by WILLIAM, ELIZABETH, HENRY, JUSTINE, PRIEST and MOURNERS corresponding to FRANKENSTEIN's mention of their names.

FRANKENSTEIN A lovely summer I had spent, back home in Geneva. I had been away, pursuing a course of medical study at the University of Ingolstadt.

WALTON I have heard of it; a most distinguished school.

FRANKENSTEIN Yes, and I the eldest son of one of the most distinguished gentlemen in the republic. Oh, what a happy family we were: Father, Mother, beautiful little William, my brother, and my cousin Elizabeth Lavenza – who had been raised by my parents from orphaned childhood. It was Elizabeth and Henry Clerval who had been my playfellows, my friends. We were a domestic circle filled

with love and affection; we thought that pain or care could never touch us. (*PRIEST begins to recite the Latin beneath the following.*) But as I prepared to return to Germany, to school, my poor mother was afflicted with the scarlet fever and did not recover. Autumn came swift and early upon us that year. I wonder now if it was not an omen - an omen of the great misery which was to follow. . . .

PRIEST Fidelium, Deus, omnium conditor et redemptor, animabus famulorum famularumque tuarum remissionem cunctorum tribue peccatorum: ut indulgentiam, quam semper optaverunt, piis supplicationibus consequantur: Qui vivis et regnas in saecula saeculorum.

MOURNERS Amen.

Each tosses a flower into the CSL pit which represents the grave, then all turn and slowly exit upstage, except for ELIZABETH who lingers at the edge of the grave. VICTOR turns and notices her and also remains behind.

VICTOR (*After a moment.*) Elizabeth? Will you come away?

ELIZABETH I can't just yet, Victor. I'm sorry.

VICTOR I see. Shall I stay?

ELIZABETH "Stay" Victor? But you only mean "wait" , don't you? You may wait, if you like, but in the morning you'll be gone as well.

VICTOR What are you saying?

ELIZABETH I'm saying that no one, nothing, "stays". I'm saying: " What does it matter?" Let you, let the whole world become doctors, but people will still go on dying, won't they?

VICTOR Yes. I suppose they must.

ELIZABETH Then it is all quite hopeless.

VICTOR Do you think so?

ELIZABETH Yes.

VICTOR (*Going to her side.*) Then what are we to do?

ELIZABETH I don't know. I don't know what to tell you, or your father... and William, how am I to make your brother understand?

VICTOR About his mother's death? Elizabeth, he isn't aware of such things...

ELIZABETH He is! But he believes she's just asleep. And he also thinks that in your studies you will learn how to awaken her again. (*Clinging to Victor's chest, weeping.*) Oh, dear God, the child thinks this is only a fairytale!

VICTOR There, there. . . .

ELIZABETH Oh, I shall miss your mother terribly. And you, Victor. Please, forgive me. . . .

VICTOR Oh, my dear cousin. . . my love. . . this grief shall pass away, you'll see. Think instead of our future - yours and mine.

ELIZABETH Have we one?

VICTOR It was Mama's dying wish, and is my fondest hope.

ELIZABETH I've never allowed myself to believe it: that someday I would be your wife.

VICTOR Believe, Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH But who is to say what may happen? You'll be so far away for so very long.

VICTOR I won't abandon you.

ELIZABETH But we've abandoned your poor father. We ought to go.

VICTOR and ELIZABETH turn upstage to see HENRY, JUSTINE, and WILLIAM approach.

VICTOR Henry? You've returned?

ELIZABETH Oh, Justine; William ought to be indoors. He'll catch a cold.

HENRY The lad refused.

JUSTINE He insisted that Madame needed more flowers for her... her bed.

ELIZABETH Oh, William - you're a dear, thoughtful boy! Shall we give the pretty flowers to Mama? (*WILLIAM tosses the flowers into the grave.*) Yes, and then it's quick to the house and Justine will bring us hot chocolate.

ELIZABETH exits and WILLIAM tugs on JUSTINE's hand, urging her to exit too.

JUSTINE Thank you, Monsieur Henry.

HENRY Justine?

JUSTINE It was kind of you to help with Master William.

HENRY Not at all.

JUSTINE and WILLIAM are gone. VICTOR and HENRY pause for a moment.

VICTOR Perhaps we might take this opportunity to say our farewells, my friend.

They embrace. As they do so, light rises on YOUNG VICTOR and YOUNG HENRY in the stage left box. During the following they embrace and exchange gifts: YOUNG HENRY gives YOUNG VICTOR a kitten; YOUNG VICTOR gives YOUNG HENRY a commedia dell'arte mask.

HENRY Last night I asked my father if he would reconsider my attending the university too, but it wasn't any use. "Learning is superfluous in the commerce of ordinary life," he said for the one hundredth time. Oh, what a stubborn old fellow he is!

VICTOR Mine also. Only my father won't admit that he'd rather I give up my studies and stay here.

HENRY And if he did ask, would you?

VICTOR No.

HENRY Look who's stubborn.

VICTOR But Henry, you know how, ever since we were children, I've always imagined myself a scientist or doctor someday. I've got to give the University more than one year to see if it suits.

HENRY What? You – the most brilliant student in your class last year? Ha – it'll suit. Someday you'll be a great and famous doctor!

Lights have faded on YOUNG HENRY and YOUNG VICTOR.

VICTOR I don't know if I'll have time to write, Henry.

HENRY And I'll have the time, but won't. I'll have Elizabeth add an occasional word for me in her letters.

VICTOR Would you look after her? And my father?

HENRY Of course I will. *(Another embrace.)* Victor, I'm sorry, you know - about your mother .

VICTOR *(Staring into the grave.)* It couldn't be helped.

A distant rumble of thunder. HENRY pulls his collar about his neck and gestures to go.

HENRY Shall we?

VICTOR You go on.

HENRY steps upstage, stops, waves. VICTOR holds up his hand in farewell and HENRY exits. VICTOR turns back toward the grave and slowly drops to his knees at the edge.

VICTOR What is it, Mama? Is it merely a sort of slumber? Do you dream? What is it?

Suddenly a GRAVEDIGGER appears on a ladder up from the adjacent 'grave', slamming his shovel on the stage floor as he ascends and startling VICTOR.

DIGGER Sir?

VICTOR Yes?

DIGGER Beg pardon, Master Victor ; sun's about to drop behind the mountains.

VICTOR Yes.

DIGGER *(Removing his cap before the grave.)* Sorry, sir.

VICTOR Yes. . . thank you. . . goodbye.

VICTOR exits upstage. GRAVEDIGGER dons his cap again and shovels dirt into the grave as lights fade on him. GRAVEDIGGER exits SR moving the museum placard at the arctic box as he goes.

Act I, Scene 3

FRANKENSTEIN As I journeyed back to Ingolstadt, I found myself increasingly anxious to resume my studies, for slowly growing in my mind was a reason for my work – a purpose. From out of my mother’s grave that bleak afternoon my destiny began to take shape. Oh, vile and filthy toil!

WALTON Vile and filthy toil?

FRANKENSTEIN How. . . how can I relate it all to you so that you can understand? So that you could forgive me?

WALTON Monsieur Frankenstein, I am not your confessor, nor am I your judge, I want only to help you as a friend would. Had you any friends at Ingolstadt?

FRANKENSTEIN No.

They freeze for a moment as VICTOR'S room shifts on: a raked plexiglass platform with huge throw, brass, and wooden gears within the floor; a large winged-back armchair; a small table beside it with books and a skull; another pile of books on the floor DSR. VICTOR stands frozen, with a middle-aged housekeeper, FRAU SCHMIDT, beside him; she holds a tea tray. Above them is a mylared-plexiglass ceiling piece; identical in size to the floor platform, which tilts to allow the reflection of the floor to be seen by the audience. This ceiling piece will also serve as a wall and doorway in later scenes.

FWANKENSTEIN *(When shift is completed.)* I lived alone and kept to myself. I had a large apartment at the top of an old house which I rented from a widow. . . .

FRAU SCHMIDT and VICTOR move. VICTOR removes his coat and hangs it over the c chair.

FRAU SCHMIDT You must be weary from your journey.

VICTOR yes.

FRAU SCHMIDT I was saddened to receive the news of Frau Frankenstein.

VICTOR *(Sipping some tea.)* Thank you, Frau Schmidt.

FRAU SCHMIDT Ja, it is hard to let them go, I know. When Herr Schmidt passed on, "Oh," I thought, "how cruel; I am too young to be alone!"

VICTOR Mmm-hmm. *(Turning away.)* I won't take supper tonight, Frau Schmidt.

FRAU SCHMIDT No? Ah, I understand. You sleep. We can talk in the morning, eh? *(She starts DSR toward the staircase.)* Breakfast downstairs at the usual hour. . . .

VICTOR Might I please just have a tray brought here, in the future?

FRAU SCHMIDT *(Stopping.)* What?

VICTOR So as not to interrupt my studies. You don't mind.

FRAU SCHMIDT *(Attempting to disguise her disappointment.)* No, no - I understand. Very well, then. Goodnight, Herr Frankenstein.

She has descended the staircase and is gone. VICTOR sits in the chair.

FRANKENSTEIN I labored at my books with a passion I had never known before, while phantom figures from my past seemed to stand about me, urging me ever onward. *(Distant piano music.)* These recollections of my youth mingled with my daily studies and together became as a torrential river which, in its wild course, swept me completely and helplessly away.

Lights have risen on YOUNG VICTOR, crouched in the lower SL box, with a book of alchemy in his hand and a dead dog in front of him.

YOUNG VICTOR "In the name of Tah and Van, which Adam heard and spoke; and by the name Asher Ehyeh, which Moses named and all the rivers were turned into blood; I, Victor Frankenstein, do potently summon and command thee that thou appearest. . . ."

ALPHONSE appears in the box above YOUNG VICTOR as FRAU SCHMIDT ascends the stairs with a dinner tray.

ALPHONSE Son?!

FRAU SCHMIDT Herr Frankenstein?

ALPHONSE What is this?

YOUNG VICTOR *(Raising the book above his head.)* Just a book, Father.

VICTOR Frau Schmidt, please! I was reading!

ALPHONSE *(Picking up the book.)* And that?

YOUNG VICTOR A dog.

FRAU SCHMIDT Your supper.

ALPHONSE A dead dog?!

YOUNG VICTOR Yes, Father. The Book has spells, I only wanted to. . . .

ALPHONSE Take it away!

VICTOR Take it away. I don't want it.

ALPHONSE *(Looking at the book with disdain.)* "Cornelius Agrippa"?! You waste your time. Go play with Elizabeth and Henry now.

VICTOR Go. Please?

ALPHONSE *(Slamming the book shut.)* This is trash, Victor. Sad trash!

FRAU SCHMIDT has descended the stairs; lights fade on ALPHONSE and YOUNG VICTOR.

VICTOR You don't know, Father. You know nothing of science.

FRANKENSTEIN If he had explained, instead of ridiculed. If he had only told me that the theories of the alchemists had been long surpassed, then I might have turned away. But instead I continued to read the words of the ancients and my mind was filled with wonder.

On the projection screen upstage the silhouettes of PROFESSOR KREMPE and VICTOR DOUBLE are seen.

KREMPE No! Have you really spent your youth studying such nonsense?!

VICTOR And you, Professor Krempe -what a repulsive, conceited little man I first thought you were!

KREMPE Useless! Utterly useless! Good God, in what uncivilized wasteland have you been living? These notions are hundreds of years old. A mind such as yours reading Agrippa, Paracelsus, Magnus? It is a tragedy!

Silhouettes fade as JUSTINE quickly enters and sits in a chair in front of the SL box.

JUSTINE *(Rapping on the pane of the upper box.)* I've arrived; you may begin.

YOUNG ELIZABETH *(Entering the box through curtains.)* "The Tragedy of Prometheus," a play by Henry Clerval.

YOUNG HENRY *(Enters box and bows to JUSTINE.)* With the poetical assistance of Elizabeth Lavenza. *(YOUNG ELIZABETH curtseys.)*

JUSTINE And Victor Frankenstein?

YOUNG VICTOR *(Appearing through the curtains also.)* No, Justine; this is Henry's idea.

JUSTINE Oh? Well, I'm ready.

YOUNG HENRY "In the beginning..."

JUSTINE "God created the heaven and the. . ."

YOUNG ELIZABETH Justine, please! You're the audience.

JUSTINE I'm sorry, Mademoiselle.

YOUNG HENRY "In the beginning, all things were one: chaos – the darkness."
(*Awkward pause.*)

ELIZABETH (*A whisper, nudging YOUNG VICTOR.*) Victor, Victor.

YOUNG HENRY Go on, Victor.

YOUNG VICTOR "And the darkness knew the night, and from them came light and day. . . ."

YOUNG ELIZABETH "Who, in turn, created love..."

YOUNG ELIZABETH gives her hand to YOUNG VICTOR as lights on them dim to half and rise, an isolated spot, on ELIZABETH, narrating a letter DSR .

ELIZABETH "My dearest love, I write to you this letter, Victor, to beg your forgiveness. At your Mother's grave I should have consoled you. There is hope, Victor, and with hope there is no real death, but life everlasting."

VICTOR (*Folding the letter to put in his pocket.*) No death.

ELIZABETH (*As lights begin to fade.*) "This I believe with all my heart."

VICTOR Merely a sort of slumber.

A distant rumble of thunder as silhouettes of HENRY and VICTOR DOUBLE appear on the screen, embracing.

HENRY (*Voice-over*) Victor, I am sorry, you know – about your mother.

VICTOR (*Voice-over*) It couldn't be helped.

Silhouette fades as VICTOR rises suddenly from his chair.

FRANKENSTEIN But then I thought – "No – perhaps it could be helped!" Certainly there were reasons, specific causes of death. And so, also, mustn't there be causes to life?

WALTON Life, yes!

FRANKENSTEIN I focused my labors on the disciplines of physiology, anatomy...

SR tower slowly rotates as lights rise on SL. VICTOR moves upstage.

YOUNG HENRY “And the Earth was arranged and disposed...”

YOUNG ELIZABETH “Birds flew about the air...”

YOUNG VICTOR “And all manner of beasts roamed the land...”

Lights fade on CHILDREN; rise on revolving SR tower to reveal FRAU SCHMIDT at open door at the top of the staircase; VICTOR DOUBLE below with a live dog in his arms.

FRAU SCHMIDT No, Herr Frankenstein, I must insist; I cannot allow you to keep this... creature... in my home! You will be so kind as to get rid of it at once!

ALPHONSE *(Entering through the door and descending the stairs.)* Victor! What are you doing?!

VICTOR *(Removing a cloth from the dismembered body of the dog just seen.)* It’s a dog.

The turntable has revolved back to its original position; ALPHONSE stands in an isolated pool of light and narrates a letter, while VICTOR dissects.

ALPHONSE “The summer has nearly ended. Of course we have given up all hopes of your paying a visit. But you must pardon me if I regard this long interruption in your correspondence as cause to believe you may be neglecting your studies as well.”

ALPHONSE exits. An offstage knock and call from FRAU SCHMIDT.

FRAU SCHMIDT Herr Frankenstein?

VICTOR What do you want?

FRAU SCHMIDT A letter from your father.

VICTOR Go away! I’m busy!

FRANKENSTEIN Autumn came; the lectures resumed. I immersed myself in analyzing the corruption of the flesh, from life to death...

VICTOR *(Removing internal organs from the dog.)* Yes, yes, yes – I understand!
But what of death to life?

Silhouettes of PROFESSOR KREMPE and MEDICAL STUDENTS at lecture.

KREMPE Now Professor Galvani's discoveries have recently led a Dr. Ure of
Glasgow to conduct his experiment on the corpse of a man. By
exposing the phrenic nerve in the neck, and applying the zinc to
silver, silver to nerve, as you know. . . well, it is reported that the
man's chest suddenly heaved and fell with what might be called a
sort of breathing...

VICTOR *(Suddenly stabbing his scalpel into the dog.)* A corpse! A human body!
(VICTOR rises and takes the dog's corpse away from the chair.)

FRANKENSTEIN But how would I acquire a corpse? I would need to engage
someone to help.

A knock.

VICTOR Come up. *(A disheveled man, ERNST, appears on the stairs.)* Well?

ERNST Me? Oh, me, I'll do anything so's to help a promising young
medical student. And I know how to keep my mouth shut, too.
Shut tight as a tomb, so to speak. As long as the money's right.

*VICTOR tosses ERNST a bag of coins as lights fade and platform retreats upstage. A rumble of
thunder.*

BENNETT What?! You man to say you stole bodies out of churchyards?

FRANKENSTEIN No, not churchyards; unconsecrated graves. Bodies of criminals,
vagabonds, beggars . . . mo would miss them?

WALTON Please continue...

*The hanging lamp which faces the audience begins to glow as SL tower rotates to reveal ERNST,
sitting on the stairs with a lantern, a loin-clothed corpse at his feet. VICTOR DOUBLE is in the
doorway above, observing.*

FRANKENSTEIN The moon looked down in silent horror upon my midnight labors,
as I dabbled among the unhallowed damp...

ERNST Ja, there's me someday: no fine burial suit, no headstone... hasn't even got a name anymore, poor bastard. (*ERNST lifts the corpse over his shoulder.*) Well, Herr Doctor - after you.

Lights fade on them as SL tower rotates and platform slowly shifts downstage again. The row is cleared except for a sheet-covered corpse [CREATURE] on the floor SR; a second corpse US, half-covered with a bloody sheet. VICTOR helps ERNST with the corpse he carries in as SL tower completes its rotation to reveal ELIZABETH and WILLIAM arranging a generous bouquet of summer flowers. VICTOR slowly saws an arm off a corpse and places it in a large pan during ELIZABETH'S speech.

ELIZABETH Oh, Victor, what has become of you? A second summer has arrived. Leave your studies, I beg you - if only for a month. Little William misses you so. What a delight he is; Justine is completely devoted to him. Sometimes, in the evenings, I gaze at your image in my locket and pretend you are here. I worry so about you; are you in good health?

ERNST exits.

FRANKENSTEIN My cheek had grown pale, my body emaciated from lack of food and sleep. My chamber also was transformed. It had become a workshop of filthy exploration.

SL tower rotates to reveal PROFESSOR KREMPE at top of stairs, lecturing to MEDICAL STUDENTS beneath him. As turntable rotates, VICTOR DOUBLE and VICTOR stare into one another's eyes.

KREMPE In another experiment the arm was agitated in such a manner that the fingers seemed to point at the spectators, who were dreadfully terrified thinking that the corpse had actually come to life...

VICTOR (*With the dismember arm in his hands.*) Galvanism! Yes! It works!

Lights rise on SL tower to reveal CHILDREN.

YOUNG VICTOR "Then the god Prometheus..."

YOUNG HENRY "... took in his hands the virgin soil. . ."

YOUNG ELIZABETH "... and kneading it up with water. . ."

YOUNG VICTOR "from this divine clay fashioned..."

CHILDREN *(In unison.) " ...a man!"*

YOUNG VICTOR assumes the 'mummy' pose of the CREATURE in the prologue.

VICTOR A man! Could a man - a complete body - could it not also be animated through Galvanism? Assembled by my hand, at my choosing: beautiful and strong. Yes! And once infused with this power, he might be made superior in strength, invincible to disease and corruption. Yes! A new species of man. And I would be blessed: as creator, master, conqueror of death!

YOUNG VICTOR " 'But Man, he must be superior to all other beings,' said the god Prometheus."

JUSTINE *(Rising from her chair.)* Enough! There is only one God: the Father Almighty! *(A rumble of thunder.)* Prometheus! Listen to the storm; even Heaven cries out in protest. I cannot watch this play any longer; it is a . . . a sacrilege! I'm going in the house. *(JUSTINE picks up her chair and exits.)*

YOUNG ELIZABETH Justine!

YOUNG VICTOR Let her leave.

YOUNG ELIZABETH But. . .

YOUNG VICTOR " 'But Man must be superior, for he was made...'"

YOUNG VICTOR &
ELIZABETH *(In unison.) " . . . in the image of the gods!"*

A rumble of thunder and blackout. Lights rise immediately again on VICTOR'S room: the corpses are gone, only a bloody sack remains on the floor. The sheet-covered corpse still lies on the floor, but the section it rests upon is slowly rising and tilting it up toward the audience. The domed light which points downward is illuminated to become an 'operating table' lamp.

ALPHONSE *(Distant, off stage.)* Victor Frankenstein - what are you doing?!

VCTOR *(Beginning to sew on the face under the sheet.)* Yes. . . your face shall resemble mine. . . as if you're my own son. *(A loud knocking at the door from the pit.)* Damn it!

FRAU SCHMIDT *(Appearing on the stairway.)* Herr Frankenstein!

VICTOR *(A growl.)* Frau Schmidt?!

FRAU SCHMIDT A man to see you.

VICTOR No!

FRAU SCHMIDT His name is Ernst?

VICTOR Very well.

VICTOR stands in front of the corpse, trying to hide it, as ERNST enters and casually looks over the body.

ERNST Busy at our studies, eh?

VICTOR *(Nodding towards the bloody sack on the floor.)* Get rid of the limbs, what's left of them. *(ERNST goes to the sack and heaves it up over his shoulder.)* I won't be need you anymore.

ERNST Oh, I'll look in on you now and then, just in case.

VICTOR Leave me! *(ERNST starts to exit down the stairs.)* And take care the woman doesn't see a thing!

YOUNG HENRY *(As VICTOR returns to work at corpse.)* "What power, Prometheus wondered, 'what power could I bestow so that Man might have dominion over all other creatures?'"

VICTOR It will not be enough. No, Galvanism will not be power enough to bring a being as great as this to life. What, then? What force is there?

YOUNG VICTOR "Fire!"

YOUNG ELIZABETH "Fire - precious and most sacred - meant only for the gods."

YOUNG VICTOR "But Prometheus went secretly up to heaven and lighted his torch."

YOUNG VICTOR "...and this stolen, holy flame he brought down to give to Man."

A great flash of lightning and a rumble of thunder. YOUNG HENRY and YOUNG

ELTZABETH to SR side of the box as it rotates 45° toward the audience. They press their faces against it, as if peering through French doors.

YOUNG HENRY Hurry, Victor – quickly!

VICTOR (Suddenly aware of an approaching storm.) Hurry, Victor!

YOUNG HENRY Look out the window at the lightning!

VICTOR Lightning! Yes! Yes! (VICTOR moves to the upstage edge of the ramp and turns a wheel which opens the doors of the ceiling, like a skylight.) But its face; it isn't finished! I am not ready!

YOUNG ELIZABETH Such a storm!

VICTOR Such a storm! Quickly, Victor – finish what you can! You've got to use the power from this storm; it may not come again! Hurry!

VICTOR rushes back to the table and sews feverishly.

YOUNG ELIZABETH Look! The poor old oak tree can barely stand up against the wind!

A great flash of lightning and a clap of thunder.

YOUNG HENRY The tree! It's... gone!

YOUNG VICTOR Yes! Electricity!

VICTOR Electricity!

The SL tower revolves 90° and the SR tower matches it to open up diagonally. A great flash of lightning fills the room, throwing VICTOR down to the floor as CREATURE 'sits' up and falls back at the jolt. Another flash; another: reaction from the CREATURE; the sheet falls to the floor to reveal a corpse completely wrapped in white gauze, but its chest rises and falls with breath. VICTOR slowly rises to his feet and gazes upon it.

VICTOR It lives? It lives. It lives! (VICTOR steps towards it and, with a pair of scissors, cuts through the head bandages. He slowly peels off the bandages around the mouth.) Breath. I can feel his breath! (As he reaches up to remove more of the facial bandages the CREATURE lifts his arm and suddenly, almost as a reflex, grabs VICTOR's arm with his hand. VICTOR, startled, pulls away, causing the CREATURE to sit up again

allowing the bandages to drop off, revealing a half-finished hideous face. VICTOR gasps and turns away in great horror.) Your face! Great God, this cannot be - not this my reward! Two years of my life, of toil and care, of hope and dreaming... oh, such dreams I had! A new species of man... beautiful. . . to praise me, to bless me. . . But this - no, this I did not conceive! This is trash, Victor; sad trash! (A mad, enraged rush of words.) Flesh, flesh, flesh, tissue, nerves, veins, arteries, hair, teeth, eyes -yes, yes - but where. . . where the beauty?!

The CREATURE raises an arm towards VICTOR and utters an inarticulate sound, his jaw open, and a weird grin on his cheeks. VICTOR covers his ears.

VICTOR *(Continued.)* No! Not a voice!. I will not have you mock me so! No! I did not want this! Not this! No! *(VICTOR rushes down the stairs, his calls fading away as platform swiftly retreats upstage into the fog, CREATURE writhing on the table, reaching towards the audience.)* No! No! No!

Stage is filled with smoke.

FRANKENSTEIN *(Voiceover.)* I rushed out the room and into the street. I ran, looking over my shoulder, watching all the while to see if it... that wretched, ugly corpse which I had so miserably given life. . could it pursue me?

VICTOR DOUBLE throws open the SL door and rushes down the stairs passing and bumping into various people the rain, who call out variously to him with mocking German ad-libs. The stage clears for a moment as HENRY enters, a valise in hand. VICTOR DOUBLE rushes past him then stops.

HENRY Victor? Victor Frankenstein!

VICTOR DOUBLE stumbles toward HENRY and faints into his arms. Thunder continues to rumble and wind rises as lights fade to Blackout.

Act I, Scene 4

In the blackout the sound of the thunder and the wind is joined with a wild cacophony of nightmare noise which crescendos and then stops abruptly. Golden, dappled light rises on VICTOR's room: the 'operating table' now in a lower position, a small wicker chair beside it.

VICTOR is lying, asleep, on the 'bed'. The sound of spring birds. VICTOR awakens suddenly with a start and looks about him. He slowly rises from the bed, but his legs crumple beneath his weight.

VICTOR Merciful heaven, what has become of me? What has happened? (He slowly pulls himself up again and looks about the room, confused and anxious.) My equipment. . . gone? And he . . . it. . . where could it. . . (An anguished cry, holding his head in his hands.) Think, Frankenstein! Try and remember! You must remember; where is it?

VICTOR walks about the room, his eyes searching. HENRY enters up the stairs, a bouquet of flowers in his hand.

HENRY (Approaching VICTOR.) Victor Frankenstein! Back to bed with you now... (VICTOR whirls about with a startled cry and strikes out wildly at HENRY, then retreats to the bed and sits at the edge of it, weeping. HENRY slowly approached him and kneels before him.) Victor, come along now; you've nothing to fear.

VICTOR (Slowly looking up into HENRY'S eyes.) Henry? Henry Clerval? (A sudden embrace.) It is you!

HENRY Yes, my friend.

VICTOR What are you. . . how is it that. . . but this is Ingolstadt, still?

HENRY (Helping him back into bed.) Yes. If this were Geneva, I daresay Elizabeth would be your nurse instead of me.

VICTOR Nurse? I have been ill. How long, Henry? The light's too strong for December.

HENRY (Showing him the bouquet.) But not for April.

VICTOR The entire winter?

HENRY Well, there's no telling exactly when you took ill; but when I arrived five months ago, the end of November. . .

VICTOR Five months! Where? Where did you find me?

HENRY Wandering the streets like a madman. At first I thought you'd come to greet my coach, but it soon became evident we met purely by chance. You seemed to fleeing someone.

VICTOR Did I say anything?

HENRY *(A chuckle.)* What didn't you say is the question.

VICTOR *(Grabbing his lapels.)* Tell me, Henry! I must know!

HENRY Nothing, Victor. All nonsense, fever, and imagining.

VICTOR Then what?

HENRY Then I brought you back here to your room and here you've stayed. *(HENRY steps away to open the skylight.)*

VICTOR I've got to ask you something Henry; was there anyone else here?

HENRY Yes. A man.

VICTOR Oh, dear God. . .

HENRY What?

VICTOR Nothing.

HENRY I sent him away?

VICTOR You did what?!

HENRY I sent him away. He said his name was Ernst...

VICTOR Oh.

HENRY . . . and that he had helped you in your experiments. You insisted that you were finished with him, so I gave him a silver piece and sent him on his way.

VICTOR My equipment. My notes.

HENRY All safely packed away; the mere sight of them seemed to upset you so.

VICTOR You did not read my notes, Henry?

HENRY Of course not. I rather doubt I'd understand the first word, anyway. All Latin: "ligamentum latum pulmonis" and so forth. I'm sorry, Victor, I had only your best interests at heart.

VICTOR Oh, my dear Henry, no, it is I who ought to beg forgiveness. I . . . good Lord, I haven't even asked how it is you came to be here in the first place.

HENRY (Pulling his chair close beside the bed.) Well, after two years of silence, your father and Elizabeth were becoming quite anxious...

VICTOR Oh, my poor family.

HENRY ... so I decided I would try and make the journey here to find out what in the world you've been doing. I went to my father once again to see if I might. . .

VICTOR . . . attend the University? Oh, no, Henry. . .

HENRY I suggested that a study of languages might be beneficial to our business, what with all the foreign merchants we deal with.

VICTOR Languages, yes! An inspired argument!

HENRY Oh, you should have been there, Victor; I tell you, it was like a scene right out of that Goldsmith play! You know the one? Where the pompous old gentleman says: "Young man, I never learned Greek, and I don't find that I have ever missed it. I have ten thousand florins a year without Greek; I eat heartily without Greek; and in short, as I don't know Greek, I do not believe there is any good in it!" (HENRY chuckles, but VICTOR just sits, staring, remembering their past.)

VICTOR (Strangely melancholy.) Henry, you should be an actor; Do you remember how you loved your plays?

HENRY Yes. And do you remember that mask you gave me?

VICTOR yes.

HENRY I still have it.

VICTOR Do you?

A pause; HENRY notices the vacant stare of VICTOR's eyes.

HENRY Yes. . . well . . . as for my study of Greek, I haven't done much what with looking after you.

VICTOR I am so sorry.

HENRY Quite all right. At least my German's much improved, after five months with Frau Schmidt. We take our meals together, play at cards in the evenings. . . .

FRAU SCHMIDT *(Downstairs.)* Herr Henry?

HENRY Ah! Speak of the devil! *(Calling down.)* Frau Schmidt! Komm hier, bitte. Seh da!

FRAU SCHMIDT *(Ascending the stairs.)* Was ist?

HENRY Seh da!

FRAU SCHMIDT *(Seeing VICTOR awake.)* Oh, Herr Victor! Gott sei dank! *(She sits in the chair beside him and clasps VICTOR'S hands.)* Oh, we were so worried. You feel better, eh?

VICTOR A bit weary, still, thank you, Frau Schmidt.

FRAU SCHMIDT Are you hungry? I've just been to market and bought some good cheese and bread. I'll only be a moment.

VICTOR No thank you, Frau Schmidt.

HENRY Now, Victor - you must eat if you want to get well.

VICTOR You're the doctor.

FRAU SCHMIDT *(Starting off.)* Gut! *(Suddenly stopping and handing HENRY a letter.)* Oh - ein Brief. *(She exits down the stairs.)*

HENRY *(Handing the letter to VICTOR).* It's for you, Victor; from your father.

VICTOR (Eagerly taking it.) My father! What must he think? It's been so long since I've written him.

HENRY (As VICTOR opens the letter and reads.) I wrote to him on your behalf. I told him you were ill, but not so much as to alarm him. I thought it best he didn't know how poor your condition really was...

VICTOR (Dropping the letter.) oh, no. . . dear God, no. . . .

HENRY (Picking up the letter.) What is it, my friend?

VICTOR William... William...

Music The platform shifts upstage and off as HENRY quickly reads then grasps VICTOR's hand as lights fade. Towers shift and ceiling drops to the floor to become a wall and doorway.

Act I, Scene 5

As the towers shift to the open diagonal position, ALPHONSE recites his letter in voice-over.

ALPHONSE (Voice-over) Victor, my son. Your brother William is dead. That gentle, precious boy, alas, he has been murdered. (The shift completed, ALPHONSE is revealed on SL turntable, seated in a chair, reciting the letter he is writing as voiceover fades out.) The day before last, William had been outdoors in the company of his governess Justine. At supper, however, Justine returned to the house alone. She said that she had fallen asleep and William had apparently wandered away from her. We spent the night in frantic search, but it was not until morning we found my son - livid and motionless on the grass in the wood - with the grey mark of a murderer's hand upon his broken throat. When seeing his lifeless form, your cousin hastily examined the neck of the child...

ELIZABETH appears through the SR tower door and descends the stairway.

ELIZABETH The locket! It is gone!

ALPHONSE Elizabeth had allowed the boy to wear her locket that day: the golden chain with your picture set in precious stones.

ELIZABETH Gone! Surely then the locket was the reason for this murder!

ALPHONSE This morning, however, the locket was found. The chambermaid discovered it in Justine's pocket. She has been arrested and is to be tried for William's murder. I know it is impossible to believe Justine guilty of such atrocity, and your cousin and I intend to testify in her defense. (*VICTOR enters from DSR and slowly approaches the CSR pit opening which represents WILLIAM's grave.*) But will you not come home, dear Victor? Come home and be our comfort?

VICTOR (*Kneeling before the grave.*) Oh, poor, dear William. Who? Who is responsible? Not Justine, certainly. Another of the servants? One who, out of fear and remorse, could have hidden the jewels in Justine's pocket? Is that it, William? Do we know the fiend?

The sound of a gavel rapping three times as image of red-robed MAGISTRATE appears, ascending in the air, upstage C of wall unit.

ELIZABETH (*Stepping forward, as if in a witness stand.*) Your honor?

MAGISTRATE Proceed.

ELIZABETH I know in my heart that it is not Justine. As for the locket upon which her prosecution rests, I can only say that if she had expressed the slightest interest in it, I would have gladly given it to her.

MAGISTRATE Thank you, Elizabeth Lavenza, I call to the stand Alphonse Frankenstein.

A distant rumble of thunder.

VICTOR Now the clouds gather. A storm is coming, William. But I cannot leave you. Who, William, who has bought this evil upon us?

ALPHONSE (*Standing; in mid-testimony.*) I ask you who -who could judge Justine capable of such treachery? So fond was she towards my boy William, caring for him with such warmth and devotion, one might think she was herself the child's mother.

MAGISTRATE Thank you, Alphonse Frankenstein; you may step down. I now call to the stand Justine Moritz.

ALPHONSE exits DSL as JUSTINE appears in the doorway, manacled and descends the stairs while the PRIEST stands in the doorway. Thunder grows louder.

VICTOR Poor Justine. Is this thunder her funeral dirge? Or do the heavens cry for you, my brother? No, dear child, you are at rest; how can you be pitied? No, it is the living – the survivors – theirs is the suffering and the sorrow.

JUSTINE I can offer no explanation as to how the locket came to be found in my possession. I cannot believe that I have an enemy on this earth – surely none so wicked as to seek my destruction. Yet I must assume it was the murderer who placed the jewels in my pocket; perhaps as I slept there in the woods, *(Her face falters with emotion.)* But why should he do such a thing?

MAGISTRATE *(Coldly.)* Speak louder, please, so that the court may hear you.

JUSTINE Why should he do such a thing? Why slay a child for the sake of a locket, only to part with it so soon?

MAGISTRATE Is there anything else you wish to tell the court?

JUSTINE No, your honor. I humbly commit my cause to your mercy, and upon my true innocence do pledge the salvation of my immortal soul.

A flash of lightning and the crash of thunder. JUSTINE, terrified, raises her manacled hands over her face and then is summoned back up through the door by the PRIEST.

VICTOR *(Regarding the storm.)* Yes! Yes! Let the sky be filled with fire! I do not fear it, for it holds no mystery for me. But let the ignorant and the guilty tremble and quake at the sight, and at the thunder's terrible roar, let the guilty be revealed in the lightning's bitter flame!

Over the rumbling thunder, the MAGISTRATE'S echoing sentence and the pounding of a gavel three times.

MAGISTRATE We find the defendant Justine Moritz guilty. . . guilty. . . guilty. . .

ELIZABETH collapses in grief on the SR staircase as the lights fade on the MAGISTRATE and a flash of lightning reveals the figure of the CREATURE through the wall, bellowing in fear at the raging thunder above its head. VICTOR whirls and sees the figure and collapses back to the ground in fear and disbelief. The CREATURE disappears.

VICTOR No! No! It cannot be!, Not alive! No! It was not in my room; it had gone! I was so certain it must have died. How? How can it still live - and be here - in Geneva?! (He looks again, but the CREATURE is still not there.) Gone. Oh God, Victor, it lives! What has it done, alone all this time? Could it. . . did it. . . is it the guilty? Is it my brother's murderer? Yes, It must be, for nothing human could have killed the boy! Oh, my Lord, I must find it!

VICTOR rushes towards the wall as ALPHONSE flings open the doors.

ALPHONSE Victor, my son! This is madness - come in out of the storm!

VICTOR Father! The murderer...!

ALPHONSE It's over, Victor. Justine has been condemned.

VICTOR They judge her wrongly!

ALPHONSE No. After the verdict was read, Justine confessed.

VICTOR Confessed? I cannot believe it.

ALPHONSE Nor can Elizabeth. She is determined to speak with Justine in her cell. Will you go with her, please?

VICTOR Yes. Yes, will.

ALPHONSE closes the doors as VICTOR walks downstage, confused, A crash of thunder and lightning and once again CREATURE is revealed behind the doors. VICTOR rushes up and pounds against them, they open and PRIEST admits JUSTINE, still manacled, into the room. VICTOR turns away and steps downstage as ELIZABETH rushes towards JUSTINE.

ELIZABETH Oh, Justine. . . Justine. . . your innocence was my only consolation!

JUSTINE (Startled at her reception; a slight pause.) And do you, my mistress, also believe me to be so very wicked? Do you join with my enemies to crush me? (Crumpling to her knees.) How can you think I killed that precious child?

ELIZABETH Rise, then. Why do you kneel if you are not guilty? But you, yourself, confessed.

JUSTINE A lie!

VICTOR What?

JUSTINE A lie! I had no choice. Once condemned, my Father Confessor, believing also in my guilt, threatened me so, and menaced. . . .

VICTOR A lie? You're not guilty?

JUSTINE Oh, Monsieur, I loved that boy.

ELIZABETH The Priest. . . what did the Priest threaten Justine?

JUSTINE Excommunication. Hell-fire. Eternal damnation unless I would admit to a crime which none but the Devil himself could have committed. May God in Heaven forgive me, I confessed so that I might gain absolution. I lied, yes, but to save my immortal soul! Yet I could not leave this world allowing you to believe that your Justine... *(Sobbing, crawling on her knees towards VICTOR.)* ...Oh, Monsieur Victor, I pray, I beg you, do not think me guilty!

VICTOR *(Unable to look at her.)* Don't. . . please, Justine. . . I know it was not you.

ELIZABETH *(Falling to her knees and embracing JUSTINE.)* We will everywhere proclaim your innocence.

VICTOR walks upstage, turning his face to the wall.

JUSTINE God bless you both. In these last moments, I take great comfort in your kindness. *(JUSTINE helps the weeping ELIZABETH rise to her feet.)* Come, Mademoiselle, dry your tears. You... you ought to cheer me. Bid me think of a better world. By the good Lord's mercy, I shall be there – in paradise – with our own little William. Oh, the thought of it does console me!

PRIEST *(In the doorway.)* Mademoiselle Moritz.

JUSTINE Yes, Father. (*JUSTINE turns toward VICTOR as a distant drum pounds a heartbeat.*) Monsieur Victor, it was kind of you to visit me; I am very grateful.

VICTOR (*Still unable to look at her.*) Oh, Justine...

JUSTINE Farewell.

VICTOR Goodbye.

JUSTINE (*Rushing into ELIZABETH's arms again.*) And you, sweet lady, my friend - let this be the end of all your misfortune. Live. Be happy. And make others so.

PRIEST My child, it is time.

JUSTINE (*Slowly stepping away.*) Yes, Father. Thank you, Father.

ELIZABETH reaches out and cries in miserable despair as the doors close behind JUSTINE. ELIZABETH runs into VICTOR's arms, sobbing uncontrollably, while VICTOR mechanically strokes her head to comfort her in his great guilt. The wall rises as heartbeat crescendos and then stops. The sound of a scaffold trapdoor and the swinging silhouette of JUSTINE, hanging. The towers rotate to "box" positions and ELIZABETH and VICTOR go to SL box where the corpse of JUSTINE stands, as if in a coffin. The domed light which points toward the audience glows for a moment, and then lights fade to Blackout. A hollow wind rises.

Act I, Scene 6

Lights rise on arctic landscape.

FRANKENSTEIN Not Justine! No - it - it was supposed to have died! I never conceived it capable of surviving on its own. My every hope for happiness was shattered, the moment I beheld my creation - that awful demon - in the storm. All my noble efforts had turned against me, and there could be no rest until I extinguished the evil which I had unleashed upon the world.

WALTON But how could you be so certain that yow creature was the murderer?

FRANKENSTEIN I knew!

WALTON Then why did you not inform the Magistrate? The poor woman's life might have been spared.

FRANKENSTEIN And what was I to tell him? That an animated corpse had committed the deed? I'd have been locked away for a madman, wouldn't I? Well? Wouldn't I? To be silent was to be free to seek out the monster.

WALTON If only I had known; to think that, only this morning, he was so near. . . .

FRANKENSTEIN What? ! You've seen him?

WALTON It looked to be a man, but it disappeared before I could fetch my telescope. I thought it best to investigate. . . .

BENNETT And here we are, trapped in the middle of a blizzard, listening to a lunatic.

FRANKENSTEIN I knew you wouldn't believe me!

WALTON (*To BENNETT.*) Have you no pity?!

BENNETT Aye, sir! I'll pity you right enough if you don't take this story of his - true or no - for a lesson and let us all go back home!

FRANKENSTEIN Coward! You would travel this far only to flee in the face of danger?

BENNETT Damn right I would! I'd rather live a coward than die a fool. This whole expedition is nothing but folly!

FRANKENSTEIN Don't listen to him, Captain. I beg you stay; take up my quest. Say you'll find him for me.

WALTON I would apprehend him. I would bring him to justice.

FRANKENSTEIN No! You must kill him on sight!

TRENT No! Never! There's got to be a trial! Every man's got a right to

FRANKENSTEIN He is not a man; don't you understand?! He is death! His sole delight is blood, carnage, and suffering !

During the preceding, dim light has risen on the SL box, wherein stands the CREATURE in the falling snow.

CREATURE (Calling towards the audience.) No! No!

WALTON What in the name of...

FRANKENSTEIN It is he!

CREATURE Frankenstein!

WALTON Men – have your pistols at the ready!

FRANKENSTEIN (*Pressing his hands against the DS wall.*) Murderer! Demon!

BEWETT Quiet! You'll have us all killed!

WALTON Whoever you are, stand forward! Show yourself!

CREATURE No. You must not see me. You would despise me.

WALTON What do you want?

CREATURE Frankenstein.

WALTON That you cannot have.

FRANKENSTEIN Shoot! Kill him! Let there be an end to my suffering!

CREATURE I, too, have suffered! Tell them, Frankenstein.

WALTON What? What would you have him tell us?

CREATURE The truth. My story. My sorrow.

WALTON (To FRANKENSTEIN) His story? There is more?

FRANKENSTEIN Oh, God, still he torments me!

WALTON You had better do as he says. Tell us. After Justine was executed, what happened?

Lights fade on CREATURE in SL box as stage floor begins to fill with mist. The silhouette of VICTOR, with a walking stick, trekking from DSR to USL.

FRANKENSTEIN We mourned. Father's health was deeply shaken by the events; Elizabeth looked after him. I told them that I needed to take a journey into the mountains to recover from my illness of before. Beneath the awful majesty of Mont Blanc there is a vast, troubled sea of ice, the Mer de Glace, which winds among the glittering peaks. There, as I walked amidst this great and terrible beauty, I beheld the figure of a man. It was he – he whom I had created.

The towers rotate bringing the boxes CS on the 45° diagonal. VICTOR has reappeared DSL as CREATURE rises up from the mist upstage center and slowly approaches VICTOR, who hides his face in revulsion.

VICTOR Devil! Fiend! You dare approach me?!

CREATURE You! I remember. You ran away. Who are you?

VICTOR God forgive me, I am your maker!

CREATURE Maker?

VICTOR Yes, and now I shall be your destroyer.

CREATURE You made me, and yet you would destroy me? Why?

VICTOR You killed my brother, didn't you?

CREATURE I did not mean to harm him.

VICTOR Oh, if only with your death I could restore the boy!

CREATURE Why did you make me ugly?

VICTOR What?! Do you reproach me for giving you life? Then let me take it back again!

VICTOR lunges towards the CREATURE who, with an arm to VICTOR'S chest, sends VICTOR sprawling on the ground.

CREATURE You hate me.

VICTOR Yes! Yes!

CREATURE All men hate me. I am alone. You have made me to suffer.

VICTOR The tortures of hell are not suffering enough, but still you must die!

CREATURE No. I will live. Hear me.

VICTOR *(Rising and stepping away.)* I will not. You are my enemy.

CREATURE I am your son! Hear me!

CREATURE places his hands on VICTOR'S shoulders and they freeze for a moment, then retreat upstage into the mist as light rises on SL box to reveal CREATURE DOUBLE, frozen, leaning against the glass.

FRANKENSTEIN "I am your son!" His words made me shudder, but still the thought seized me: "Did I not give him life? Did I not owe him a word in his own defense?" I could say nothing. I listened.

Act I, Scene 7

Lights slowly fade on arctic box, shifting our focus exclusively to the CREATURE DOUBLE in the SL box, who pantomimes with FRANKENSTEIN'S voice-over narration.

FRANKENSTEIN He told me first of a darkness: a realm without thought or sensation. But with the lightning came a bright and sudden flood of sight, sound, touch, and smell. And he perceived my figure before him, crying out in terror, and then leaving him alone. Confused. . . afraid. . . he awkwardly tried to follow me, wandering aimlessly in the storm, until he reached the forest outside Ingolstadt. To slake his thirst there was only the rain. There was nothing to eat. Hungry. . . helpless. . . he fell asleep.

When next he woke a great sphere hovered in the sky. It was the moon, gentle and white. It pleased him, for the moon allowed him now to better see his world.

The sound of forest creatures.

FRANKENSTEIN He noticed there were other beings, too, living in the wood. And that was comforting.

Towers begin to rotate so that boxes gate offstage and flat, mirrored walls are at right angles to the proscenium.

FRANKENSTEIN The nights to follow were spent foraging nuts and berries from the ground, and water from pools and stream. But one evening he came upon a sight of great wonder: light, not in the sky, but on the ground.

GYPSIES enter and campfires glow. Music and singing; laughter and conversation in ad-libbed Hungarian.

FRANKENSTEIN And to his ears came sounds unlike any he had heard before. He drew near and saw that there were creatures. . . creatures himself.

CREATURE slowly enters campsite and is unobserved for a few moments. Suddenly a GYPSY CHILD sees CREATURE and screams. Two or three GYPSY MEN attack CREATURE, but he is seemingly impervious to them. GYPSIES rush off, frightened. CREATURE steps downstage and picks up a cloak which has been left behind, touching and sniffing it. Carrying the cloak with him he moves back upstage to one of the fires. He reaches out toward it and touches the coals, screaming in pain. As he does so, GYPSIES reappear with flaming torches in their hands and CREATURE runs off with GYPSIES in pursuit.

FRANKENSTEIN He fled in terror. The land grew Wren and rose up into great mountains of cold stone and ice. (Wall descends as CREATURE enters DS and lies, face down, moaning.) There he rested and wondered why -why was he so despised by these creatures? Were they not his own kind? And then the moon shone down in reply and he saw, frozen in the ice around him, his own hideous reflection.

CREATURE turns upstage and slowly crawls towards his reflection in the wall. He touches it and then moans pitifully in anguish. He quickly moves as far downstage as possible, over the pit, and then drops down out of sight.

FRANKENSTEIN Who would he find in the world who might look upon his wretched face with affection? Where would be his refuge?

Doors to the wall open and three peasants enter and step downstage. A young man and woman, FELIX and AGATHA, and a white-haired old man with a gauze bandage wrapped around his head which covers his eyes: DE LACEY. DE LACEY sits on a wooden stool and AGATHA and FELIX kneel at his feet as CREATURE slowly pokes his head up at edge of pit and observes.

FRANKENSTEIN (Voice-over) In a valley stood a lonely cottage. The creature dared not show himself, but he discovered an entrance to a tiny root cellar from where he could peer through a chink in the wall. There he did hide and looked upon the only home, the only family, he would ever know.

DE LACEY (Handing FELIX a prayer book.) Felix, will you read?

FELIX "My joy is the Lord, and, my impulse is towards Him:
He who became like me, who took my form,
That I might not turn away from Him,
And so He could pity me in His abundant grace, "

DE LACEY Thank you, Felix. (Passing the prayer book to AGATHA.) Agatha, will you continue?

AGATHA Yes, Father.

"Then let me sing to the Lord in my joy,
And let me play the harp of many tones,
Because the knowledge of the Lord hath arrived.
And there shall not be anyone or anything that is mute,
For He hath given a mouth to His creation,
To open the voice towards Him, to praise Him.
Alleluia."

DE LACEY &
FELIX Alleluia.

DE LACEY Amen.

FELIX &
AGATHA Amen.

CREATURE (Softly, with wonder.) Am... men. . .

Lights slowly dim on the DE LACEYs as FELIX steps CR to reignite the dying fire [live flame].
An isolated pool of light remains on CREATURE.

FRANKENSTEIN *(Voice-over.)* The sounds they uttered were pleasing to the ear, and the Creature longed to make them, too. As the winter passed he succeeded by mimicking their speech, and he understood it to be a means of communicating with others. He had made of that cellar a home...

CREATURE Home.

FRANKENSTEIN ...sleeping by day. . .

CREATURE Day

FRANKENSTEIN ...rising at night. . .

CREATURE Night.

FRANKENSTEIN . . . to observe his adopted family.

CREATURE Family. Father: man. Agatha: woman. Felix: man.

Lights quickly rise again on DE LACEYs. FELIX and AGATHA are preparing to depart.

DE LACEY Felix, I do wish you weren't going.

FELIX We need the food, Father.

DE LACEY But I don't fancy the thought of you two travelling by night.

FELIX And we don't like leaving you alone at night.

DE LACEY Bah – night, day; to a blind man there's no difference.

FELIX Would it make you feel better if Agatha stayed?

AGATHA I wouldn't mind.

DE LACEY What? Deprive you of the first opportunity in months to mingle with society?

AGATHA It's only the village market.

DE LACEY It's people. Now, go, go - but take care. With the spring thaw comes avalanche, you know.

AGATHA *(Kissing DE LACEY on the cheek.)* We'll be careful.

FELIX You may expect us back before sunset tomorrow.

DE LACEY Sunset, sunrise ; to a blind man. . .

DE LACEY,
AGATHA & FELIX . . . there's no difference!

FELIX *(Embracing DE LACEY.)* Goodbye, Father.

DE LACEY Goodbye. *(FELIX and AGATHA exit. A brief pause. DE LACEY calls after them.)* Now don't forget to ask after any news from Paris!

AGATHA & FELIX *(Off stage.)* Yes, Father!

DE LACEY picks up his guitar and begins to strum softly as CREATURE timidly approaches the cottage, rehearsing his words under his breath.

CREATURE Hello. Hello. Hel. . . .

DE LACEY *(Stopping his strumming; listening.)* Hello? Is anyone there?

CREATURE does not answer. DE LACEY resumes playing. CREATURE suddenly blurts loudly.

CREATURE Hello!

DE LACEY *(Setting down his guitar.)* I knew it had to be someone. Come in, come in - warm yourself by the fire.

CREATURE The fire. It is warm. Yes.

DE LACEY I haven't much more than this to offer you, I'm afraid.

CREATURE Food.

DE LACEY If we had any, I would gladly give you. . .

CREATURE No. Food. I give to you.

CREATURE holds out a small package of nuts wrapped up in leaves.

DE LACEY What's this? Oh - I see -nuts. Why, that's very kind of you. Will you have some?

CREATURE No. Thank you.

DE LACEY By the way, my name is "De Lacey" ; what's yours?

CREATURE My name?

DE LACEY Yes.

CREATURE *(Thinking; after a pause.)* uhhhh. . . Felix!

DE LACEY No; this is a coincidence! My son's name is Felix, too. Do you know what "Felix" means? It's the Latin word for "happy". But, then, you probably know that since it's your own name.

CREATURE Happy.

DE LACEY And I am very happy to make your acquaintance. *(DE LACEY holds out his hand far CREATURE to Shake it, but CREATURE doesn't. DE LACEY drops his hand and pauses for a moment.)* Where is your home Felix? Near? Far?

CREATURE Home? Home is near.

DE LACEY Oh, well, one might say we're neighbors then, eh? You must forgive me, the children and I've not met many people yet, having lived here only since the summer. We came from Paris.

CREATURE Paris?

DE LACEY I was once a wealthy man, but for my beliefs I was stripped of my possessions and imprisoned by the state. It was in prison I fell ill and lost my sight -no doubt you have noticed I am blind. Felix and his bride were finally able to beg my release, but I had to agree to live in exile, away from my country and my friends.

CREATURE Friends.

DE LACEY Oh, but why trouble you with my petty sorrows? You - a stranger.

CREATURE No. A friend. I would be.

DE LACEY Very well. My friend. I must say, you are a man of few words, Felix. *(A sudden thought.)* But of course here I've been assuming you're a Frenchman like myself. You're not, are you?

CREATURE No.

DE LACEY Then I'll not trouble you to speak. I seem to be talking enough for the both of us, as it is. But I get lonely without the children for company.

CREATURE Lonely.

DE LACEY Would you rest here for the night? Please say "yes."

CREATURE Yes. I will rest here. *(CREATURE has picked up the guitar and inadvertently brushes the strings.)* Music.

DE LACEY *(Taking it.)* Oh, yes. Do you play? I'll show you, if you like. Give me your hand. *(DE LACEY reaches for CREATURE'S hand, who is reticent to offer it.)* Don't worry; it's quite simple. Your hand, Felix. *(CREATURE allows him to take it.)* Good heavens - how cold it is! *(DE LACEY reaches up the CREATURE's arm toward its face, CREATURE pulls away.)* Forgive me. I only wanted to touch your face to see what you look like. It doesn't matter. You just warm your hands by the fire and I'll play you a song, eh? A simple song. Without words.

DE LACEY begins to play the guitar . CREATURE listens and slowly raises his face upward and raises a hand to his cheek to wipe away a tear.

Lights slowly fade. to Blackout.

Intermission.