

# FRANKENSTEIN

or The Modern Prometheus

MARY SHELLEY



## WALTON'S LETTERS

### LETTER ONE

To Mrs Margaret Saville, England  
St Petersburg, 11 Desember 17 -

My dear sister,

I arrived here yesterday, in good health and full of hope. The cold wind from the north fills me with excitement. I dream of the North Pole, the goal of my voyage. In my dream it is a beautiful place where the sun never sets, and I will be the first man to walk upon its virgin snow. I am not afraid of danger or death. Who knows? I might find a passage to the East that will help our traders, or perhaps I will discover something useful to science. So do not worry about me, Margaret. You know that I always wanted to be an explorer, except for the few years when I tried to be a poet and failed. Ever since I inherited my fortune six years ago, I have dreamt of this voyage. In two weeks I will go to Archangel to hire a ship and a crew. In June we will sail north. When will I return to you? I do not know. If I succeed, years will pass before we meet again. If I fail, you will see me soon or never.

Goodbye, my dear Margaret.

Your affectionate brother,  
R. Walton

### LETTER TWO

To Mrs Saville, England  
Archangel, 28 March 17 -

I have hired a ship and crew. The men are brave and diligent, but I have no friend. I have no one to talk to about my hopes and fears. I will not find a friend here at Archangel or one the sea.

As I wait for the voyage to begin, I am full of excitement. Sometimes I am happy. At other times I am afraid. Will I see you again, dear Margaret? Write to me often. Your letters comfort me. If you never hear from me again, remember me with affection.

Your brother,  
Robert Walton

### LETTER THREE

To Mrs Saville, England

7 July 17 -

My dear sister,

The voyage has begun at last. I am well and in good spirits. Although great sheets of ice float past us on the sea, it is summer, and warm winds blow us north. Now I feel sure that I will succeed! Goodbye, Margaret!

R.W.

### LETTER FOUR

To Mrs Saville, England

5 August 17 -

I must tell you about the strange thing that has happened. Last Monday we were surrounded by ice. The ship could not move. We were surrounded by ice. The ship could not move. We were very far from land. We waited anxiously, looking out at the ice, which stretched to the horizon. Suddenly, we saw a sledge pulled by dogs

going north. A gigantic man drove the sledge. We watched until he disappeared from sight.

Later the ice broke, and we were able to move again. The next morning, we found another sledge on a floating sheet of ice in the sea. The man in this sledge was weak, tired, and half-frozen. We invited him onto the ship, but he said, 'Tell me first where you are going.' When I told him we were going north, he climbed onto the ship. We gave him food and warm clothes. For two days he was very ill, and I feared he had gone mad. When he had recovered a little, I asked him what he was doing alone on the ice.

'I am following someone,' he said.

'Someone who is also travelling alone on a sledge?' I asked.

'Yes.'

'Then I think we have seen him.'

He asked many questions about 'the devil', as he called the other man. Which way was he travelling? Did I think that the breaking of the ice had destroyed the other sledge? From that moment, he was full of energy and much. I wrote in one of my letters that I would not find a friend on the sea, but maybe I was wrong. I cannot send this letter, so I will continue it as a journal to send you when I can.

13 August 17-

The man's name is Victor Frankenstein. I like him more every day. I admire him and pity him. He speaks well, he is intelligent and sensitive, but he has some secret sadness.

Now that he is a little stronger, he spends all his time on the deck, watching for the other sledge. I watch with him, talking about me hopes for this voyage. One day I told him of my ambitions to gain knowledge and succeed where other men have failed. My words disturbed him.

'Unhappy man!' he said, 'Do you share me madness? Let me tell you my story, and I hope it will be a warning to you.'

He was too ill to continue.

19 August 17 -

Yesterday the stranger said to me, 'I have had a very unhappy life. I want to tell my story to you, because you too are ambitious. You want knowledge and wisdom, as I once did. 'Today he will begin to tell me his tale. Every night I will write down his words. You must be eager to read his story. Think, then, how eager I am. I know him. I can hear his wonderful voice and see his shining eyes. How awful must be the tale that has ruined such a man!

## CHAPTER ONE

# FRANKENSTEIN'S NARRATIVE

I was born in Geneva. My father was a magistrate. I had a little brother called William and an adopted sister called Elizabeth. My

parents found Elizabeth living with a poor family in Italy. She was gentle and very beautiful, with golden hair and blue eyes. Her real parents, an Italian nobleman and a German lady, were both dead. My mother and father adopted Elizabeth and brought her to our home.

Elizabeth and I grew up together, and we were very happy. I spent my days with Elizabeth, William, and my dear friend Henry Clerval. Henry wanted to be a poet. He loved nature and beauty, but I was interested in science. I wished to make some great scientific discovery. I wanted wisdom and knowledge, and I wanted to succeed where other men had failed.

When I was seventeen, my parents decided to send me to the university at Ingolstadt, but my departure was delayed by the first misfortune of my life. Elizabeth became ill with scarlet fever, and my mother nursed her. Slowly Elizabeth recovered, but my mother caught the illness from her. When my poor mother was dying, she called us to her bedside and said, 'Dear Victor and Elizabeth, your father and I hope that one day you two will marry. Be happy, my children, and take care of little William.'

She died calmly. How can I describe our sadness? There is no need. Everyone knows that sadness, or will know it one day. A few weeks later I went to the university in Ingolstadt. I walked around the town during the first three days. I met some of my professors and fellow students, but I felt lonely and disappointed. I had no desire to study. Then I went to hear a lecture by Mr Waldman, the professor of chemistry. At the end of the lecture, he spoke of modern chemistry in words I will never forget.

'Modern chemists can perform miracles,' he said. They have followed Nature to her hiding places. They have penetrated her secrets. They have discovered how the blood circulates. They understand the nature of thunder storms and earthquakes. They are like gods.

Those were the professor's words - or the words of Fate - spoken to destroy me. I left the lecture full of a new ambition. 'I will

discover new things in science,' I thought. 'I will explain the mysteries of creation.'

The next day I went to Mr Waldman. 'I wish to be your student,' I said. He showed me his laboratory and told me what books to read. My future was decided.

## CHAPTER TWO

I was a diligent student. I became very interested in the human body. 'Where does life come from?' I asked myself. To study life you must also study death. I began to work with dead bodies. I studied the progress of their decay. I examined the change from life to death and from death to life. Then one day I suddenly understood. I was surprised that nobody had discovered the secret before. I had succeeded where other men had failed.

I am not mad. I swear it is true. After days and nights of work, I discovered how life was created. I, myself was able to create life.

I can see by your eager expression, my friend, that you want me to tell you the secret. I will not tell you, and soon you will understand why not. Listen to my story, and learn from my example. Knowledge is dangerous. An ambitious man is not a happy man.

My first task was to create a body. I worked day and night. I grew thin and pale, but I continued to work. The moon watched me through the window as I uncovered the secrets of Nature. What horrible work it was! I explored dead bodies and tortured living animals, but my work did not seem horrible to me then. I thought that I had conquered death. I would be the creator of a new race of happy and excellent creatures!

All summer I worked on my filthy creation in a lonely attic room. I did not see the sunshine, the flowers, or the green leaves. I did not write to my family or think about them. I thought only of my work.

Any ambition that makes you forget the people you love and the simple pleasures of ordinary life is bad. The leaves fell from the trees, and still I worked. I became anxious and nervous. I avoided other people. I hid myself like a criminal. My creation was nearly done. Soon it would be finished, and then, I promised myself, I would rest and recover my health.



## CHAPTER THREE

I completed my creation one cold rainy night in November. With trembling hands I gathered my instruments to give life to the dead thing that lay at my feet. It was one o'clock in the morning when, by the light of the candle, I saw the yellow eye of the creature open. He breathed. He moved.

How can I describe him? I had tried to make him beautiful. Great God! His skin was yellow and wrinkled. His hair was long and black. His eyes were watery. He was monstrous!

I had worked for nearly two years for this moment. Now that the moment had come, I felt nothing but horror and disgust. I ran out of the room. For hours I lay awake in my bedroom, horrified by what I had done.

When at last I fell asleep, I dreamt that I saw Elizabeth, young and healthy, walking in the streets of Ingolstadt. Delighted and surprised, I embraced her, but when I kissed her she grew pale and cold. Her face began to change into the face of my dead mother. She was wrapped in a shroud, and I saw the grave-worms crawling in its folds.

I woke up trembling with horror. My forehead was cold with sweat. By the pale yellow light of the moon, I saw the monster I had created. He was standing beside my bed, looking down at me. He made a sound, grinned at me, and stretched out his hand to touch me. I ran away and spent the rest of the night outside.

The next morning was grey and rainy. I walked the streets of Ingolstadt, afraid to return to my apartment. Suddenly I heard someone call my name. Turning round, I saw Henry Clerval stepping out of the coach that had just arrived from Geneva.

'My dear Frankenstein!' he cried. I am so glad to see you! I have come to study at the university.'

We walked to my apartment together. I asked him about my father, Elizabeth, and William.

They are all well, but they are a little worried because you do not write to them,' he said. Then he stopped and looked at me anxiously. 'But my dear Frankenstein, you are ill! You are so pale and thin!'

I told him that I had been working too much. I did not want to think about what had happened the night before. I was afraid to see the monster again, but I was even more afraid that Henry would see him. When we came to my apartment, I left Henry at the door. I ran upstairs and into my room, trembling with fear. The apartment was empty. Relieved, I called Henry and told him to come upstairs.

'Victor, what is the matter?' asked Henry.

I covered my face with my hands and said. 'Do not ask me.' Then I fainted. Poor Clerval! I was very ill for several months. Henry nursed me. He did not tell my family how ill I was. He did not wish to worry them.

Slowly I recovered. By the time I was well enough to look out of my window again, it was springtime. One morning, Henry brought me a letter. It was from Elizabeth.

## CHAPTER FOUR

My dear Victor,

We are so worried about you. I know you can not write yet, but please write to us as soon as you can. Get well soon and come home to us. You will find a happy home full of people who love you. Your father is in good health. William has grown tall. He is a lovely little boy, with his smiling blue eyes. Justine, the servant who nursed your mother during her last illness, has returned to us after an unhappy time with her real family. I know that she loved your mother very much.

Get better soon, dear Victor, and please write to us. Thank Henry for his kindness and his many letters.

Your affectionate,

Elizabeth

I wrote to my family that day. As soon as I was well enough, I took Clerval to meet the professors at the university.

I did not return to my studies. The thought of science filled me with anxiety and disgust. Instead, I read poetry and studied Oriental languages with Clerval. I stayed with him in Ingolstadt all that year. When spring arrived again, Henry and I went for walks together in the countryside. The blue sky and green fields made me very happy. I made plans to visit my family.

One Sunday, I returned from our walk to find a letter waiting for me.

## CHAPTER FIVE

The letter was from my father.

My dear Victor,

How can I tell you what has happened? We were all so happy, waiting for you to come home. I want to prepare you for the awful news, but it is impossible.

William is dead! Your sweet little brother has been murdered! Last Thursday, Elizabeth, William, and I went for a walk in Plainpalais. William ran off to play. When it came time to go home, we called his name, but he did not answer. We searched until it was dark, but we could not find him. Then Elizabeth, said he might have gone home. We returned to the house, but he was not there. We went back to Painpalais with torches and servants to help in the search. About five o'clock in the morning, I found him, dead. The marks of the murderer's fingers were on his neck.

When Elizabeth saw the body, she cried 'Oh, God! I have murdered my lovely boy!' She told me that she had given William a locket on a chain with a picture of your mother inside it. The locket is gone. Perhaps the murderer killed William for the locket.

Come home, dear Victor! We need you. Do not think of revenge. Just come home to those who love you.

Your father,  
Alphonse Frankenstein  
Geneva, 12 May 17

Horried by this news, I said goodbye to Clerval and left for Geneva immediately. At first I wished to get home as soon as possible, to comfort my poor family, but when I got close to Geneva I began to feel afraid. I stopped two days at Lausanne, in a state of

nervous anxiety. Then the lake and the mountains calmed me, and I continued my journey.

The sight of Mont Blanc brought tears to my eyes. As I approached my hometown I became afraid again. It was dark when I arrived, and the city gates were already closed for the night. I decided to visit the place where William had died and spend the night in a nearby village. When I got to Plainpalais, there was a thunder storm. I watched the lightning over Mont Blanc.

Suddenly, in a flash of lightning, I saw a gigantic figure nearby. It was the monster! Was he the murderer of my little brother? I began to tremble. In another flash of lightning I saw him climbing Mont Saleve with amazing speed. He soon reached the top and disappeared.

Two years had passed since I created the monster. Was this his first crime? I spent the rest of the night in the mountains, trembling and crying. I felt as if the monster were a horrible part of myself, forced to destroy everyone I loved.

The sun rose, and I hurried to my father's house. I wanted to tell what I knew of the murderer, but then I thought, 'If I tell the truth, everyone will think I am mad.' I decided to remain silent.

My father and Elizabeth met me at the door. They were both thin and pale with sorrow.

'Welcome, my clearest Victor,' said my father. 'What a pity you did not come months ago, when we were happy. Poor William! He was such a lovely, little boy!'

We three all wept in each other's arms. Then my father said, 'It makes me even sadder to think that Justine could have clone such a thing.'

'Justine?' I asked, amazed.

'Did you not know?' asked Elizabeth. 'Justine has been arrested for the murder of William.'

'But she is innocent.' I said.

'I wish I could believe that,' said my father. He explained that on the morning after the murder Justine had fallen ill and spent several days in bed. One of the servants, taking Justine's clothes to be washed, found something in her pocket. It was the locket, with the picture of my mother inside, that had been on a chain around William's neck.

'Justine is innocent,' I said again.

'Oh thank you, Victor,' cried Elizabeth. 'I feel sure that she is innocent. Perhaps you can prove it. You are so kind and generous. No one else believes in poor Justine.'

## CHAPTER SIX

At eleven o'clock Justine's trial began. In the court I suffered torture. Was I to be the cause of her death too? I wanted to tell everyone that I was the guilty one, but I had not been in Geneva at the time. Everyone would think I was mad, and Justine would be punished anyway.

She told her story to the court. I went to search for William,' she said. 'I searched for hours. It was late at night, and I was tired. I lay down in a barn to rest for a few minutes, but then I fell asleep. In the morning, I woke up feeling ill, so I went home and went to bed. I do not know how the locket, with the picture of Mrs Frankenstein inside, came to be in my pocket.'

They did not believe her. Justine was found guilty of the murder. I felt sick with horror and despair. The next day she was hanged. Elizabeth wept, but her sadness was the sadness of innocence. I, the true murderer, had no hope or comfort.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

I felt as if my soul were in hell. I wanted to kill the monster I had created. When I thought of him, my mind was full of hatred and revenge. I wished to see him again so that I could avenge the deaths of William and Justine.

My father became ill with sadness and grief. Elizabeth grew pale and thin. I felt horribly guilty. My only comfort was to escape to the mountains and forget my sorrows for a few days. The mountains and rivers were made by God. In the magnificent Alpine valleys, I felt His power and was afraid of nothing else.

On one of these journeys, in August, nearly two years after the death of Justine, I entered the valley of Chamonix. Rivers of ice came down from the mountains. The great white dome of Mont Blanc stood above me. I decided to climb Montanvert. I remembered the view from the top of the mountain. That sublime landscape alone could tranquillize my soul.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

Montanvert is very steep. The path winds slowly up the mountain. The pine trees on both sides were heavy with snow. It was midday when I arrived at the top of the mountain. Then I climbed down onto the glacier. I spent two hours crossing that great river of ice. Then I sat on a rock to rest, looking back at Montanvert and, behind it, Mont Blanc. The snowy peaks of the mountains glistened above the clouds in the sunshine. For a moment I was happy.

Suddenly I saw a man running towards me over the ice. As he approached me at great speed. I recognized him. It was the monster I had created! I trembled with hatred and anger. 'Devil!' I cried. 'Are you not afraid to approach me? Are you not afraid that I will avenge the deaths of those you have murdered?'

'I expected this,' said the monster. 'Everyone hates me. I am the most miserable creature on earth. Even you, my creator, hate me. You say you will kill me. How dare you play with life and death! Do your duty towards me, and I will do my duty towards you and the rest of mankind. Do what I ask and I will leave you and them in peace. If you refuse, I will murder everyone you love.'

'Hateful monster! Devil! I was mad to create you. Now I will destroy you!'

'Be calm,' he said, 'and hear my story. Remember that you made me stronger than you. Oh Frankenstein, you are fair to everyone else! Be fair to me, your creature, as well! I should be your Adam, but instead I am your Satan. Everywhere I see happiness, but for me there is no happiness. I was good, but unhappiness made me evil. Make me happy, and I will be good again.'

'Go!' I cried. 'I will not listen to you. We are enemies. Either go or fight with me until one of us is dead.'

'How can I make you understand?' replied the monster. 'I was capable of love and kindness. But I am alone. Everyone hates me. I

hide in the mountains. I live in the caves of ice. If people knew of my existence, they would try to kill me. How can I love them when they hate me? If I am unhappy, I will make them unhappy too, but you can save them. If you refuse my request, I will kill not only you and your family but many others too. Listen to my tale. In court, the guilty are allowed to speak in their own defence before they are condemned. You say I am a murderer, but you want to murder me, your own creature. Listen to me, and then, if you wish, destroy the work of your own hands.'

'Do not remind me that I am your creator. I wish you had never come to life. I curse my own hands for having made you! Go! I hate the sight of you!'

'Then do not look at me,' said the monster, and he put his horrible hands over my eyes. 'Do not look at me, but listen. Hear my tale; it is long and strange. Before the sun sets this evening, you will know everything. Then you will decide whether I will go away to live a harmless life or stay to murder your fellow creatures.'

I agreed to listen to his story. I was curious to know what had happened to him, and for the first time, I felt that as his creator I had a duty towards him. He took me across the ice to a small hut. Inside, he lit a fire. I sat down, and the monster began his tale.

## CHAPTER NINE

# THE MONSTER'S NARRATIVE

I do not remember very much about the beginning of my life. I saw, felt, heard, and smelt all at the same time. When I left your apartment, I took your coat, because I was cold. I remember the light grew strong, and I had to close my eyes. I looked for shade and found it in the forest of Ingolstadt. There I rested by a river. After a while I felt hungry and thirsty. I drank from the river and ate some berries, then I fell asleep.

'When I awoke it was dark and cold. I was frightened. I sat down and wept. Soon a gentle light came, and I saw a shining white form rise above the trees. I felt only hunger and thirst and light and darkness. When I looked at the moon I felt pleasure.

'Days and nights passed. Slowly I began to distinguish the things around me. I discovered that the pleasant sounds I often heard came from the birds that flew across the light. That pleased me. Sometimes I tried to imitate their sounds, but I could not.

'The moon disappeared from the night. Then it came again, but smaller this time. I was still in the forest. One cold day I found a fire that some travellers had left burning. The warmth of the fire gave me pleasure. I put my hand into the fire and felt pain. Crying and nursing my hand, I looked at the fire. How strange, I thought, that it gives both pleasure and pain. I saw that it was made of wood. I gathered wood to keep the fire burning, then lay down beside it to sleep.

'Often I spent the whole day looking for food. Sometimes I went to sleep hungry. I decided to leave the forest and find another place where there was more food. I began my journey in the evening and walked for three days. Then I came to the open country. Snow had fallen the night before, and the fields were white. I shivered with cold. In the morning I saw a small hut. I entered. Inside was an old man, preparing some food over a fire. When he saw me, he screamed and ran out of the hut. He ran across the fields and disappeared from

sight. I had never seen a hut before, and it seemed a wonderful place. I ate the old man's food then lay down and fell asleep.

'I awoke at midday and continued my journey. At sunset I arrived at a village. I admired the huts and cottages. I saw vegetables growing in the gardens. I saw milk and cheese through the windows of the cottages. I was hungry. When I entered a cottage, the children inside screamed, and a woman fainted. The villagers came running. Some attacked me. I escaped to the open country. I hid myself in a small hut beside a cottage. It was bare and uncomfortable, but I was happy to have found a place to hide from the weather and from the violence of human beings.

Lying in the hut, looking out through a crack in its wooden wall, I saw a young woman. She carried a bucket filled with milk. She looked sad. Then a young man appeared. He too had a sad expression. He took the bucket from her and carried it into the cottage. She followed, and they disappeared from sight.

'My hut shared one wall with their cottage. In this wall there was a window, but it was covered with planks 2 of wood. One of the planks had a small hole in it. I looked through the hole. The inside of their cottage was clean but very bare. An old man sat beside the fire, playing a musical instrument. The sound he made was more beautiful than the sounds of birds. The young woman was sitting close to him. I could see that there were tears in her eyes. The old man did not notice this until she sobbed aloud. Then he called her name. She came to him, and he put his arms around her. I felt both pleasure and pain watching them. I had never felt that way before, and I moved away from the window, unable to bear my emotions.

'When night came, I was surprised to see that the cottagers could make light with candles. They sat around the fire, and the young man made sounds that I did not understand. I now know he was reading aloud to them. After a while, they put out the candles and went to bed.'

## CHAPTER TEN

I lay on the floor of my hut, but I could not sleep. I thought about the cottagers. How kind and gentle they were! I longed to be with them, but I was afraid. I remembered how the villagers had attacked me. I decided to stay quietly in my hut, watching the gentle cottagers through the hole in the window.

I soon discovered that the old man was blind. He spent his days sitting by the fire. Sometimes he played music. The young man and the young woman were very gentle and kind to him. At first I thought that their lives must be happy. They had food, fire, and friendship with each other. Yet I noticed that all three looked sad. It was a long time before I discovered that they were very poor. Sometimes in the winter there was very little to eat. On those days, the young woman put all the food on the old man's plate, and she and her brother ate nothing.

'Slowly I realized that they could communicate with each other by making sounds. This was really a godlike science! I wanted very much to learn to speak, but it was difficult. After a few months in my hut, listening to them, I could say "fire", "milk", "food", and "wood". I also learned the people's names. The young woman was called "sister" or "Agatha". The young man was called "Felix", "brother", or "son". But the old man had only one name, "father". I was very happy each time I learned a new word. Some words, like "good", "dearest", and "unhappy", I heard but did not understand.

'I spent the winter listening to them and learning. I hid in the hut during the day and came out at night to look for food. I also collected fire wood and left it for the cottagers. Sometimes I swept the snow from their path. In the morning, when they found the wood and the clean path, they were very surprised. They spoke to each other, using words like "good spirit" and "wonderful", but I did not yet understand those words.

'Every evening Felix read aloud to the others. At first I did not understand what he was doing. Then I realized that he used many of the same sounds in his reading as he used in speech. I thought perhaps there were signs for words written on the paper. I wanted very much to learn to read those signs.

'I knew that I could not show myself to the cottagers until I had mastered their language. Maybe my words could win their sympathy, despite my monstrous appearance. My cottagers were graceful and beautiful. I loved to look at them, but how frightened I was the first time I saw my face reflected in the water! At first I could not believe that it was my own face. When I realized that the horrible reflection really was me, I felt great sadness and shame.

'Spring arrived. The air was warm, birds sang, and leaves began to grow on the trees. Happy, happy earth! Everything was so green and beautiful that I was filled with joy. I spent many hours imagining the future. In these fantasies, I showed myself to the cottagers. At first they were horrified by my appearance, but then I slowly persuaded them to accept me and even to love me.'

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

One day in the spring a young lady arrived at the cottage. As soon as he saw her, Felix's expression changed from sadness to great joy. When the young lady spoke to the cottagers, they did not understand her. It seemed she had a language of her own. She was very beautiful, with dark hair and eyes. Felix called her his 'sweet Arabian'. She did not understand but smiled. The old man embraced the young stranger affectionately. Gentle Agatha kissed her hands.

'In the evening I noticed that the cottagers were repeating the same sounds again and again. The young stranger repeated after them. I realized that they were teaching her their language. If I listened, I too could learn. When the stranger went to bed, Felix said, 'Goodnight, sweet Safie.'

'The days passed peacefully. The only difference was that now my cottagers were happy instead of sad. Safie and I learned the language very quickly. Meanwhile, the woods were full of flowers, and the nights grew warm and pleasant.

'My days were spent in study. I learned more quickly than Safie. We learned to read as well as to speak. The book Felix used to teach Safie was Volney's Ruins of Empires. Felix explained everything as he read aloud. Through this book I learned a little about the histories, governments, customs, and religions of many different countries. I heard of the Greeks and early Romans. I heard of the decline of the Roman Empire, chivalry, Christianity, and kings. I heard of the discovery of America and wept with Safie over the sad fate of the American Indians.

'These stories amazed me. How could human beings be so powerful, noble, and good, but, at the same time, so violent and evil? I learned of the division of property, the rich and the poor, and of aristocratic families.

'I learned that to be rich and from an aristocratic family was the best condition. A person could be respected with only one of these advantages, but with neither of them he was a slave. He had to work for the good of the fortunate few.

'And what was I? I knew nothing of my creator. I had no money, no friends, and no property, and I was horribly ugly. I was not even a human being. I saw and heard of no others like me. The smiles of Safie and the gentle words of Agatha were not for me. I was a monster, alone in the world. My sadness grew with my knowledge. I wished that I had stayed in the woods and never known anything more than hunger, thirst, and cold.'



## CHAPTER TWELVE

Slowly I came to understand the history of my cottagers. The old man's name was Do Lacey. He was a Frenchman of good family. They had lived in Paris in a beautiful house. Safie's father was a Turkish merchant who had lived in Paris for many years. On the day Safie arrived from Constantinople to live with him, her father was put in prison by the French government for some crime I did not understand. Many people felt that he had been unjustly condemned. Felix was present in the court when the Turk was condemned to death. Horrified, Felix decided to help him to escape from prison. The Turk offered money, but Felix refused to take it. Then he saw the lovely Safie, and he fell in love with her.

'In the days before the escape, Safie wrote several letters to Felix, with the help of a servant who understood French. I have copies of these letters, which I will give to you. They will prove that my story is true. In her letters, Safie explained that her mother was a Christian Arab who had been enslaved by the Turks. Safie's father fell in love with her and married her. Her mother, born in freedom, taught Safie to be a Christian and to want more liberty than Muslim women are allowed. Although her mother was dead, Safie remembered these things. She did not want to return to Asia and live in a harem. She wanted to marry a Christian and live in a Christian country.

'On the day of the escape, old De Lacey and Agatha left their house and hid in an obscure part of Paris. Felix, meanwhile, left Paris with the Turk and Safie, who were travelling on passports in the names of old De Lacey and Agatha. They left France and travelled through Italy. Safie's father wished to return to Turkey. He promised Safie and Felix that they would be married, but secretly he hated the idea of his daughter marrying a Christian.

'News came from Paris that old De Lacey and Agatha had been arrested and put in prison for helping the Turk to escape. Felix

immediately went back to Paris. The Turk agreed to leave Safie in a convent in Leghorn, where Felix could find her when he returned. Felix and his family were put on trial and found guilty. They lost their fortune and were exiled from France. Felix wrote to the Turk to tell of his misfortunes and his new home in Germany, but the Turk had not kept his promise. He had returned to Turkey, ordering Safie to follow with his property when it arrived in Leghorn. Safie tried to argue with him, but he left in anger, ordering her again to follow him in a few days. Once alone, Safie sold her jewels and travelled with a servant to Germany to find Felix and his family.'

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

One night in August, when I was walking in the woods, I found a bag full of books. I took it and ran back to my hut. The books were *Paradise Lost*, Plutarch's *Lives*, and *The Sorrows of Werther*. These treasures gave me great happiness. They showed me new worlds of thought and feeling. Sometimes they filled me with joy, but more often they filled me with sadness. I thought Werther a divine being, and I wept at his death, although I did not really understand it.

'As I read, I thought of my own feelings and condition. In some ways I resembled the people in these books, but in other ways I was different from them. I was alone. My body was gigantic and ugly. What did this mean? Who was I? What was I? Where did I come from? What was the purpose of my life? I asked myself these questions often, but I could not answer them.

'Plutarch's *Lives* taught me to love and admire the heroes of the past. I read about men who governed or murdered their fellow human beings. I preferred those who governed peacefully, because they resembled my cottagers.

'When I read *Paradise Lost*, I thought it was a true story. It often reminded me of my own condition. Like Adam, I was the only example of my kind, but God made Adam beautiful. Adam's creator cared for him and talked to him. I was completely alone. Often I thought I resembled Satan more than Adam. Like Satan, I saw the happiness of other creatures, and I felt envious.

'The coat I took from your apartment had some papers in the pocket. When I had learned to read, I looked at them. They were your journal for the four months before you created me. When I read it, I cursed my creator. Why did you make me so horribly ugly that even you turned from me in disgust? Even Satan had friends, the other devils, to admire him, but I had nobody. My creator had abandoned me.

'The autumn passed. I saw, with surprise and grief, the leaves fall from the trees. Nature became once again cold and sad, as it was when I first awoke in the woods. In summer the flowers and birds had comforted me. Now I longed even more to show myself to the cottagers. To win their affection was my greatest ambition.

'I decided to enter the cottage when the old man was alone. I knew that my ugliness frightened people, but my voice was not frightening. I thought that I could talk to the old man first and win his sympathy.

'One day in winter Safie, Agatha, and Felix went for a walk in the countryside. The old man was left alone in the cottage. Trembling with excitement and fear, I knocked on the door of the cottage.

"Who is there?" said the old man. "Come in."

"I am sorry to disturb you," I said. "I am a traveller, and I am tired. Please would you let me sit by your fire for a few minutes?"

"Come in," said the old man. "My children are not home, and I am blind, so I will not be able to get you food." "I have food. All I need is a little warmth." 'I sat down. After a silence, the old man asked, "Are you French?"

"No," I replied, "but I was educated by a French family. I am going to some friends who, I hope, will help me." "Are they German?" asked the old man.

"No. They are French. I have no other friends in the world. These people have never seen me, and I am afraid, because if they will not help me I have no other hope."

"Do not despair. If your friends are good people, they will help you."

"They are kind," I said. "They are wonderful people, but they are prejudiced against me. I am not bad. I have never hurt anyone, but when they look at me they will see a horrible monster."

"If you really mean no harm, can you not explain that to them?"

"Yes. I will try. I love these friends very much. For many months I have been doing small things to help them, but they believe I want to hurt them."

"Where do they live?" asked the old man.

"Nearby."

"If you will tell me your story, perhaps I can help you. I cannot see your face, but I like your voice. I want to help you."

"Thank you!" I cried. "Those are the first kind words that have ever been spoken to me."

"Will you tell me the names of your friends?" he asked.

'At that moment I heard the sounds of the young people returning to the cottage. "Help me!" I cried. "Now is the moment! You and your family are the friends for whom I am searching. Do not abandon me!"

'Felix, Safie, and Agatha entered the cottage. How can I describe their horror when they saw me? Agatha fainted. Safie ran out of the cottage. Felix attacked me and hit me with a stick. I could have killed him with my bare hands, but I did not. Filled with pain and sorrow, I ran out of the cottage and escaped unseen to my hut.'

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Cursed creator! Why did I live? Why did I not die in that horrible moment? I felt angry, and I wanted revenge. I could have destroyed the cottage and killed the cottagers with pleasure. When night came, I left the hut and ran howling through the woods. The cold stars shone down on me, and the bare trees swayed in the wind. Like Satan, I carried a hell inside me. From that moment, I was at war with mankind, and above all, with the man who had given me this miserable life.

'When I returned to the cottage, I found that the cottagers had left. I waited all day. They did not return. That night in anger I placed wood around the cottage and set fire to it. The cottage burned quickly to the ground, and I ran into the woods.

'Where could I go? I thought of you. I knew from your journal that you were my father, my creator, and that Geneva was your hometown. I decided to go there. You were my only hope, but I hated you.

'It was a long and difficult journey. Because I was afraid of being seen by human beings, I travelled only at night. Rain and snow fell upon me. I had nowhere to hide. As I came closer to your hometown, my anger and my desire for revenge grew stronger.

'One morning I continued walking after the sun had risen. The forest was far from any village, so I thought I was safe. It was the beginning of spring. The sun warmed me, and I felt happy for the first time in many months. Walking by the side of a river, I heard human voices. I hid myself under a tree. A young woman ran towards the place where I was hidden. Suddenly, she slipped and fell into the river. I ran out of my hiding place and jumped into the river to save her. When I carried her onto the river bank, she fainted. Then a man appeared. He ran towards me and took the young woman from my arms. Then he turned and ran into the forest. I followed him. When

the man saw me behind him, he shot me with a gun. I fell to the ground, and he escaped into the woods.

'I was in awful pain. Was this the reward for my kindness? I had saved a human being from death, and now I suffered for it. I swore revenge on all mankind. For several weeks I lived a miserable life in the forest, trying to nurse my wound. Finally it healed, and I continued my journey.

'It was evening when I reached the countryside around Geneva. I was very tired and lay down to sleep in a field. I was woken by the approach of a beautiful child. As I looked at him, I thought perhaps he was too young to be frightened of me. If I could take him with me and educate him, I would not be alone anymore. I tried to take him in my arms, but when he saw me he put his hands over his face and screamed.

"Why are you screaming, child?" I said. "I will not hurt you."

"Let me go!" cried the child. "Monster! Ugly monster! You want to kill me and eat me! Let me go, or I will tell my father!"

"Come with me," I said.

"No!" cried the boy. "Let me go! My father is Mr Frankenstein, the magistrate. He will punish you."

"Frankenstein!" I cried. "Then you are from the family of my enemy."

'The child kept screaming at me. I put my hands around his throat to silence him. The next moment he lay dead at my feet.

'I looked at the dead child, and I felt glad. "I too can cause pain," I thought. "This will make Frankenstein suffer!"

'Then I saw something around his neck. It was a chain and locket. In the locket was a picture of a lovely woman. For a few moments I looked at it with pleasure, then my anger returned. No woman would ever love me. If this woman could see me she would faint or scream.

'I left the place where I had murdered the child to look for a hiding place. I entered a barn. There I found a young woman asleep. She was not as beautiful as the woman in the picture, but she was young and healthy. "She will smile at everyone except for me," I thought. I bent over her and whispered. "Wake up, your lover is here! I would die for one of your smiles. Wake up!"

'She moved in her sleep. I was afraid she would awaken. If she woke up, she would scream, and I would be arrested for the murder. That thought brought out the devil in me. "She, not I, will suffer for the murder," I thought. "It is her fault really, the fault of all the women who will never smile at me." I put the locket in her clothes and ran away.

'After a few days, I came to these mountains. I am alone and miserable. No human being will love me, but someone like myself would love me. Make me a wife, Frankenstein. Create a female of my own kind. This you must do for me.'



## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The monster stopped speaking and waited for an answer. 'I refuse to do it,' I said. 'Go away! I have given you your answer. I will never create another being like you!'

'You are wrong,' said the monster, 'but instead of being angry, I will reason with you. I am bad because I am sad. Everyone hates me. Why should I pity human beings when they do not pity me? If people would be kind to me, I would be kind to them, but that cannot be. If I cannot have love, I will have revenge. All I ask is a female like myself. We will be monsters, alone in the world, but we will have each other. Our lives will not be happy, but they will be harmless. Do not refuse me.'

I was moved. As his creator, it was my duty to make him happy if I could. He saw the change in my expression and said, 'If you agree, I will go with my wife to the forests of South America. We can live on berries. We can sleep under the trees.'

His words made me pity him, but when I looked at his face I felt nothing but disgust. After thinking for a long time, I said, 'I will do it. You must promise to leave Europe forever as soon as I give you a female to go with you, and you must promise to stay away from human beings.'

'Promise!' cried the monster. 'Go home and begin your work. I will watch you, and when you are ready, I will appear.'

With these words he left me. I saw him go down the mountain at great speed. He disappeared over the river of ice as the sun was setting.

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

I returned to Geneva, but I did not have the courage to begin my horrible work. I was in better health now, and, when I could forget my promise to the monster, I was happier too.

One day my father said to me. 'I am glad to see that you are better, Victor, but I notice that you are still sad sometimes. Is it because of Elizabeth? I have always hoped you and Elizabeth would marry. You have loved each other since you were children, but maybe I have been blind. Perhaps you love Elizabeth as a sister. Perhaps you love someone else and want that other person to be your wife. Am I right, Victor? Is this the reason for your sadness?'

'My dear father,' I replied. 'Do not worry. I love Elizabeth very much, and I want to marry her.'

'I am so happy to hear that. Why not marry as soon as possible?'

The idea of marrying Elizabeth immediately filled me with horror. I had to create the female and see the two monsters leave Europe before I could marry.

An Englishman had made new discoveries in science. I wanted to speak to this man before beginning work on a female for the monster. I thought it would be better to do my awful work in England, far away from my family. Therefore I told my father that

I had to go to England and that when I returned I would marry Elizabeth. My father and Elizabeth asked Clerval to travel with me. At first I thought that this would make it more difficult to do my work, but then I was glad. I thought the monster would not come near me while Henry was there. I did not like to leave my Family alone, ignorant of their enemy. But I thought that the monster would follow me to England, so my family would be safe.

Clerval and I left Geneva in September. On the journey, Clerval noticed all the beauties of nature, but I was gloomy. Slowly his love

of nature tranquillized my soul, and I began to enjoy the passing landscape with him.

Clerval, my dear friend! Where is he now? Does he now only exist in my memory? No! His body is gone, but his spirit still visits me!

Forgive me for showing my sorrow. It is so painful to remember him. I will continue my story.

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

We spent some months in London. Clerval was planning to visit India. He hoped to be able to help the progress of European colonization and trade there. He spoke several of the languages of India and was interested in the people. In London there were many men who could help him.

I spoke to the English scientist, then I began collecting the materials for my creation. I hated the thought of beginning this awful work. After some months, we received a letter from a person in Scotland who invited us to visit him. We left London in March and travelled slowly north. We stayed in Oxford then in Matlock. We spent two months in Cumberland and Westmorland, which were almost like the Swiss mountains. The snow on the northern sides of the mountains, the lakes, and the rivers made us feel at home. Then we went on to Scotland. I was not sorry. It was now many months since I had made my promise, and I was afraid of the monster's disappointment. Sometimes I feared that he might hurt my family. At other times I thought he would punish me by murdering Clerval. I felt as if I had committed some great crime.

When we got to Perth in Scotland, I told Clerval that I wished to travel alone for a month or two. 'Enjoy your visit,' I told him, 'we will meet here when I return.' Henry did not want me to go. He told me to write to him often and to come back as soon as possible.

After I left Clerval, I travelled north. I was sure that the monster had followed me. I went to one of the smallest islands of Orkney. On the whole island there were only three miserable huts, and one of them was empty. I rented it and moved in with my instruments and materials. There I worked every morning. In the evenings I walked by the sea. As my work proceeded it became more and more hateful to me. Sometimes I did not work for two or three days. At other times I worked day and night, hoping to finish it quickly. The things I had to do often made me feel sick, but I continued to work.



## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

One evening I sat in my laboratory. The sun had set, and the moon was rising over the sea. I began to think about what I was doing. 'Three years ago,' I thought, 'I was doing the same thing. I created a devil whose violence has ruined my life. I am now creating another. She might be even more evil than her mate. He has promised to leave Europe and hide himself in the forests of South America, but she has not promised. She might refuse. They might even hate each other. The monster hates the sight of his own face. Might he not hate the sight of his monstrous mate? She might turn from him in disgust. She might leave him.'

'If they do leave Europe together,' I thought, 'they will have children. They will create a race of devils that might destroy mankind. Have I the right, for my own comfort, to do something that would be a curse on future generations?' Before, I had been moved by the monster's arguments and frightened by his threats. Now, for the first time, I realized how wicked my promise was. I thought with horror that perhaps future generations would curse me as the man whose selfishness had caused great suffering to the whole of mankind.

I trembled. Then, looking up, I saw the monster at the window by the light of the moon. He was watching me. His face was horribly ugly. It was an evil face. Trembling with anger, I tore to pieces the half-finished creature. The monster saw me destroy his mate. With a howl of pain, he ran away.

I left the room, promising myself that I would never return to that work. I went to my bedroom and spent hours by my window, looking out at the moon. There were a few fishing boats on the water. From time to time, the silence was broken by the voices of the fishermen calling to one another. Then suddenly I heard the sound of oars in the water. A boat was approaching the shore. A few minutes later, I heard my front door open. I trembled with fear and wanted to

cry out for help, but I could not. Like someone who is dreaming a frightening dream, I could neither speak nor move. My bedroom door opened, and I saw the monster.

He spoke to me in a trembling voice. 'You have destroyed the work you began. What does this mean? Will you break your promise? I have followed you over Europe to this cold gloomy place. I have been tired and hungry, and now you destroy my hopes.'

'Go away!' I cried. 'Yes, I break my promise. I will never create another as evil and monstrous as you are.'

'Slave! I reasoned with you before, but you are unreasonable. Remember that I have the power to make you miserable. You are my creator, but I am your master. Obey!'

'Your threats cannot force me to do something evil,' I said. 'Go away! Your words only make me angrier.'

The monster said, 'Every man has a wife. Every animal has a mate. Will I be the only creature to live alone? I was capable of love, but everyone hated me. I will not let you be happy while I am miserable. I want revenge more than warmth or food. Before I die, you will be sorry that you were ever born. Remember this: I will be with you on your wedding night!'

He ran away. A few moments later, I saw him in his boat, which shot across the water with the speed of an arrow. 'So,' I thought, 'he will murder me on my wedding night.' I thought of poor Elizabeth. 'How she would suffer if she lost me!'

As the sun rose, I went out and walked on the beach. I would have been happy to live forever on that miserable island, if only I could live in peace. When I left the island it would be to meet my own death, or the deaths of those I loved, at the hands of a monster I myself had created.

At midday I fell asleep on the grass. When I awoke, the sun was setting. What had happened the night before seemed like a bad dream.

A fishing boat landed on the beach, and a man from the boat brought me two letters. One was from my father and the other from Clerval. Clerval wrote that he would soon return to London to complete the arrangements for his journey to India. He asked me to meet him at Perth as soon as possible. I decided to leave the island in two days.

First I had to pack my chemical instruments. The next morning, I entered my laboratory. The remains of the half-finished creature lay on the floor. I felt almost as if I had murdered a human being. With trembling hands I collected my instruments. Then I gathered the remains of the creature and put them in a basket with some heavy stones.

When the moon rose that night, I went out in a small boat. I felt like a criminal. I waited until a black cloud covered the moon for a few minutes, then I dropped the basket into the sea. Relieved, I lay down in the boat and fell into a deep sleep.

When I awoke it was morning. There was a strong wind, and my little boat was in danger. The wind had blown the boat far away from the island, and I did not know where I was. All day the little boat tossed on the sea. I was horribly thirsty and frightened. I thought I was going to die. Then I imagined Elizabeth, my father, and Clerval - all left behind for the monster to murder.

At sunset, I saw land in the distance. Tears of joy filled my eyes. As I approached the shore, I saw boats, a harbour, and a small town. I brought my boat into the harbour and stepped onto the shore. People gathered to watch, but they did not offer to help me. 'My friends,' I said, 'could you please tell me the name of this town?'

Nobody replied. The people looked angry and unfriendly. 'What is the matter?' I asked. 'The English are not usually so unfriendly to strangers.'

'I do not know about the English,' said one man, 'but the Irish hate murderers.'



What could this mean? Another man stepped forward and put his hand on my shoulder. 'Come, sir,' he said. 'You must talk to Mr Kirwin.'

'Who is Mr Kirwin? Why must I talk to him?'

'He is the magistrate, sir.' said the man. 'He will want to ask you some questions about a gentleman who was found murdered here last night.'

I was surprised but not greatly worried. I was innocent and could prove it. I followed the man to Mr Kirwin's house. I had no idea then of the horror that was waiting for me.

## CHAPTER NINETEEN

Mr Kirwin was a kind old gentleman. He asked one of the witnesses to tell his story. The man said he had been fishing the night before with a friend. The wind grew strong, so they landed their boat some distance from the harbour. On the beach they found the body of a young man. There were black finger-marks on his neck.

When I heard about the finger-marks, I began to tremble. The magistrate noticed my nervousness. The other fisherman said that, just before they found the body, he had seen a boat with one man in it not far from the shore. He believed it was the same boat in which I had just landed.

A woman said that she had been standing at the door of her cottage near the beach, about half an hour before the body was discovered. She had seen a boat with one man in it leave the shore near the place where the body was later found.

When Mr Kirwin had heard these witnesses, he took me to the room where the body lay. I was not worried, because I knew that I had been seen by people on the island at the time of the murder. I was sure that I could not be found guilty.

I entered the room. Imagine my horror when I saw on the table the body of my friend Clerval! 'Oh Henry!' I cried. 'Have I been the cause of your death too?' I fainted. For two months I was very ill. They thought I was dying. I cried out in my illness, calling myself the murderer of William, Justine, and Henry. Sometimes I begged for help to kill the devil who was torturing me. At other times I felt his fingers around my neck. Since I spoke in my own language, only Mr Kirwin understood me. Why did I not die? What was I made of that I could suffer so much and still live? In two months I recovered to find myself in prison. Mr Kirwin was the only person to show me any kindness. One day he came into my prison cell. 'How are you?' he asked gently.

'Nothing can comfort me,' I replied.

'When you were ill,' he said. 'I looked at the papers that were in your pockets. I found a letter from your father, so I wrote to Geneva to tell him what had happened.'

'Have you news from my family?' I asked eagerly, 'Has anything terrible happened?'

'Your family is well,' said Mr Kirwin, 'and someone has come to see you.'

For a moment I thought the monster had come to watch my suffering. 'Do not let him in!' I cried. 'I cannot see him!'

'Why? Do you not wish to see your father?' asked Mr Kirwin.

'My father!' I was weak with relief. 'Oh, please! Where is he?'

Mr Kirwin left the room, and a moment later, my father entered. I stretched out my hand to him. 'Oh father, you are safe! And Elizabeth?'

'She is well. Poor Victor! What a terrible place this is! And poor Clerval!'

I wept. 'Yes, my dear father,' I said. 'Some horrible destiny hangs over me!'

I recovered quickly. After the trial, I was released from prison. It was proved that I had been on the island at the time of the murder. I travelled home to Geneva with my father, feeling sad and hopeless. Often I thought of killing myself, but I had a duty to protect the people I loved from the monster I had created.

Ever since my illness I had taken opium to help me sleep. The opium gave my body the rest it needed, but my mind still suffered in terrible dreams. Sometimes I dreamt that the monster's fingers were around my neck. Waking up to find no monster there, I felt relief. For the moment I was safe.

## CHAPTER TWENTY

We stopped in Paris for a while, because I was not strong enough to travel on. There my father wished me to go out and see people. He hoped that this would cure my sadness, but I could not bear to see people. How they would all hate me if they knew that I had created a monster who took pleasure in murdering them! In my despair, I told my father more than once that I was responsible for the deaths of William, Justine, and Henry. Sometimes he asked me to explain. At other times he seemed to think my words were a result of my illness. I could not explain. He would have thought I was mad.

A few days before we left Paris, I received a letter from Elizabeth.

My dear, Victor,

I am so glad that you are coming home. How much you must have suffered! I want you to find comfort and tranquillity. For this reason, my dear friend, I am writing to explain something to you.

You know that both your parents always wanted us to get married. We have always loved each other, but perhaps our love is the love of brother and sister. Tell me, dearest Victor. Do you love someone else? You have been away for many years, first in Ingolstadt and then in Britain. When you left last year, I thought maybe you were running away from me. I love you and have always dreamt of a future together with you, but I want your happiness as well as my own. Our marriage would make me miserable if I thought that you did not with it. Believe me, Victor, I love you too much to make you unhappy. Be happy, my friend. Obey me in this one request, and I will be contented.

Elizabeth

Geneva, 18 May 17

This letter reminded me of the monster's threat - 'I will be with you on your wedding night'. On that night the devil would destroy me and so destroy the only hope of happiness I had to comfort me.

Sweet Elizabeth! I read her letter several times. I dreamt of the paradise of her love, but the apple was already eaten, and the angel was ready to drive me out of the garden. I decided to marry as soon as I got home. I wrote to tell her this. My letter was calm and affectionate. 'Do not be afraid, my love,' I said. 'My only hope of happiness is in marrying you. I have a terrible secret. When I tell you my secret, you will understand why I have been so miserable. I will tell you on the morning after our wedding. Do not ask me about it until then.'

My father was glad. He spoke of the comfort we would be to each other. He spoke of children being born to replace the loved ones we had lost. All I could think of was the monster's threat, 'I will be with you on your wedding night'. I thought it meant that he would kill me then. I was not afraid of my own death. Great God! If for one moment I had imagined what he really planned to do, I would have left home forever. I thought I was preparing my own death, but really I was preparing hers.

We made the arrangements for the wedding. As the day approached, I began to feel better. The monster's threat seemed like a bad dream, but my happiness with Elizabeth seemed real and close at hand.

Elizabeth looked a little sad on our wedding day. Perhaps she was thinking of the awful secret I would tell her the next morning. After the wedding, there was a party at my father's house. Then Elizabeth and I left for our honeymoon on Lake Como. Those were the last moments in my life when I felt happiness. The sun was shining. We saw Mont Saleve and, in the distance, Mont Blanc. I held Elizabeth's hand. 'You look sad, Elizabeth.' I said.

'I am content,' she replied. 'Something tells me not to hope for happiness, but I will not listen. Look at the mountains and the lake, Victor. What a divine day! How happy nature appears!'

## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

It was evening when we arrived at the hotel. A strong wind I blew from the west. Clouds raced across the moon. It began to rain. I had been calm during the day, but now I was afraid. I kept my hand on the gun in my pocket. Every sound frightened me. 'What is the matter, Victor?' asked Elizabeth.

'Do not ask, my love,' I replied. 'After tonight, we will be safe, but tonight is terrible.'

Suddenly I thought of how frightened she would be if she saw the fight between the monster and myself. I asked her to go to bed. I would not go to her until I had discovered where my enemy was hiding.

She left me, and I walked through the house, searching everywhere. I did not find him. Suddenly I heard a dreadful scream. It came from Elizabeth's room. As I heard it, I realized the truth. She screamed again, and I ran into the room. Great God! Why did I not die? Why am I here to tell you this terrible tale? There she was, dead, lying across the bed, her head hanging down, and her face covered by her hair. I fainted.

When I recovered, I was surrounded by the people of the hotel. They had moved Elizabeth to another room. I escaped from them to that room, ran to the bed where Elizabeth lay, and embraced her. The marks of the devil's fingers were on her neck.

Looking up, I saw the monster standing outside the open window in the yellow moonlight. He grinned at me and pointed at the

body of my wife. I ran to the window, taking the gun from my pocket, but he ran away at great speed and jumped into the lake.

The sound of the gun brought people running into the room. We searched for him for hours, but we did not find him. I returned to the hotel, feeling sick with horror. Suddenly I thought of my father. The monster might be going to him now. He might murder my father. I decided to return to Geneva as soon as possible.

On the journey back I wept. A devil had robbed me of every hope of future happiness. No creature has ever been as miserable as I was.

When I arrived at Geneva, I found my father alive, but he became ill when I told him the terrible news. He could not live with the horrors that surrounded him. In a few days he died in my arms.

What happened to me? I do not know. Sometimes I dreamt I was walking in flowery fields to the people I loved, but I awoke to find myself in prison. Slowly I recovered, and they released me. They had called me mad, and I had spent many months in a cell alone.

I thought I had no use for liberty, but slowly, as I recovered, I began to want revenge. I was filled with a maddening anger when I thought of the monster. I began to think of how I could get him. I went to a magistrate and told him that I knew who had destroyed my family. I told my story calmly, giving the dates and the places. I did not want him to think I was mad. He listened to me, then he said, 'If the monster is as you have described him, I will not be able to catch him. He can live in caves of ice. He can run faster than any man. I will try my best to arrest him, but I am afraid I will fail.'

'You do not care about my revenge,' I said. 'If you cannot help me, I must pursue him alone.'

He must have thought I was mad. He tried to calm me as a nurse tries to calm a child. I left the house in anger.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

Revenge alone gave me strength. I decided to leave Geneva. I took my money and began the travels that will end only with my death. I have travelled all over the world. I have suffered all the difficulties that travellers in deserts and savage countries suffer. Often I have prayed for death, but revenge has kept me alive. I could not die and leave the monster living.

Before I left my hometown forever, I visited the cemetery where William, Elizabeth, and my father are buried. The night was nearly dark. The spirits of my loved ones seemed to be around me. They were dead, and I lived. Their murderer too was alive, and I must keep living to destroy him. 'I swear,' said I, 'that I will find him and kill him, if he does not kill me first. Help me, good spirits, to find him. Help me to avenge you. Let him feel the despair that I feel now!'

In the silence of the night, I heard a loud and terrifying laugh. I felt as if hell were all around me. The laughter stopped and a voice said, 'I am content. You have decided to live, and I am content.'

I ran towards the sound, but I did not catch him. The moon came out from behind the clouds, and I saw him running away at amazing speed. I pursued him. For many months I have been following him. I pursued him over the Mediterranean and over the Black Sea. I followed him over Russia. Sometimes people who had seen him told me where he had gone. Sometimes he himself left some sign for me. He wants me to follow him. He is afraid I might despair and die. I travelled through snow. I saw the print of his great foot on the white ground. How can you, who are young and innocent, understand what I felt? I was cold, tired, and hungry, but that was nothing. I carried a hell inside me. Sometimes, when I was dying of hunger, I found food. I think it was left there by the good spirits who travelled with me. Often, when I was thirsty, a few drops of rain would fall and relieve me.

I tried to follow the rivers, but the monster avoided them, because there are more people by the river banks. In other places I



saw no human beings. I ate the wild animals that I killed. I had money, and I gave it to the villagers to win their help and friendship.

I was only happy when I slept. My good spirits gave me sweet dreams. In sleep I saw William, Clerval, Elizabeth, and my father again. Often, during the day, I told myself that I was dreaming and would wake up that night with the people I loved. At such moments, my revenge was more a duty than a desire.

I do not know what the monster felt. Sometimes he left messages written on the trees. 'Follow me to the frozen north,' he wrote, 'where you will suffer but I will not. I have left a dead rabbit for you. Eat. We will fight to the death, but you will suffer tortures before that moment arrives.'

I hate him! I will get my revenge! I will search for him until I die! Then how happy I will be to go to Elizabeth and the others. They are waiting for me!

As I travelled north, the weather became colder. The rivers were covered with ice, and I could get no fish. The monster was happy when I suffered. In one message he wrote, This is just the beginning! You will suffer much more than this!

I bought a sledge and some dogs to pull it. In the sledge, I could move very quickly. I did not know if the monster had the same advantages, but every day I got closer to him. I reached a village on the sea shore. There the people told me of a gigantic being who had taken food and a sledge with dogs. He had a gun, they said. He had set off in the sledge over the sea of ice. They believed that the ice would break and he would be killed.

I followed him. I do not know how many days have passed since then. One day one of my-dogs died of cold and fatigue. I nearly despaired, but then I saw a dark speck in the distance. It was him!

It was then that the ice broke. The sea rolled between me and my enemy. I was left as you found me, on a floating sheet of ice. If I die before he does, swear to me, Walton, that he will not escape. Kill him for me! I do not ask you to follow him, but, if he appears when I

am dead, swear you will kill him! He speaks well and his words might persuade you, as they once persuaded me. Do not trust him. Remember the spirits of William, Justine, Clerval, Elizabeth, my father, and your unhappy Victor. Kill him. My spirit will be near to help you.

## WALTON'S JOURNAL CONTINUES

26 August 17-

You have read this strange and terrifying story, Margaret. Do you feel your blood run cold as I do? Sometimes he could not continue his tale, he was so moved. At other times he spoke, but with difficulty. I could hear the pain in his voice.

I wish I could comfort him, but I cannot. His only comfort now will be death. He believes that the spirits of his loved ones speak to him. What a wonderful man he must have been, before misery ruined him! One day he said to me, 'When I was young I thought I was destined for greatness, but now I know that, like Satan, I am chained to hell.'

I wanted a friend, and I have found him, but I will lose him now. I try to interest him in life, but he asks me, 'Can any be what Clerval was to me? Can any woman be another Elizabeth? Even if I met people as good as they were, it would not matter. We love the people we knew when we were children. They know us as no later friend can know us.'

2 September

My dear sister,

I am in danger, and I do not know if I will ever see England again. I am surrounded by mountains of ice. There is no escape. Perhaps the ice will destroy my ship. The crew look to me for hope, but I have no hope to give them. If we all die, my mad ambitions are the cause.

Frankenstein feels sorry for me. He tries to comfort me. His words encourage the crew, but each day they become more nervous, and I fear they will rebel.

5 September

I do not think these papers will ever reach you. We are still surrounded by mountains of ice. It is very cold, and many of my men have already died. Frankenstein grows weaker every day. I wrote in my last letter that I was afraid that the crew would rebel. This morning, as I sat with Frankenstein, some of the men came into the cabin. They told me that the crew wanted to return home. If the ice breaks, they want me to promise that I will turn the ship southwards.

I had thought that Frankenstein was too ill to speak, but he turned towards them and said, 'What are you saying? Did you not think that this was a glorious and honourable expedition? And why? Not because it was easy. It was glorious and honourable because it was difficult, because it was surrounded by danger, because it required all your courage and strength. You dreamt of being remembered as brave men who had risked danger for the good of mankind. And now, when you face the first real danger, you want to go home! You are ready to accept the shame of a defeat! Oh! Be men! Be more than men! You can succeed if you have the strength and the courage to do it. Go home as heroes, not as cowards who were afraid of the cold.'

The men were moved. They looked at one another. I said to them, 'Go back to your work and think about what has been said. If you still wish to go home, I will go. But I hope that your courage will return.'

They left the cabin. Frankenstein closed his eyes.

I do not know what will happen. I would rather die than return home in shame and defeat.

7 September

All is lost. I have agreed to go south if the ice breaks. I will come home a disappointed man. This is difficult to bear.

12 September

It is finished. I am returning to England. I have lost my hopes of glory. I have lost my friend. On the ninth of September the

ice began to move. Frankenstein was very ill and could not leave his bed. On the eleventh the path to the south was free. I told Frankenstein that we were sailing for England.

'Are you really going home?' he asked.

'Yes.'

'Go home then, but I cannot.' He tried to get up but fell back on the bed.' The doctor came to see him and told me that he had only a few hours to live.

I sat with Frankenstein. His eyes were closed, and I thought he was asleep, but after a while he began speaking to me in a weak voice. 'I am dying, Walton, and the monster is still alive. I feel no hatred now. I no longer want revenge, but my enemy must die. I have been thinking about all that I have done. I do not think I was wrong. In a fit of madness I created a rational creature. It was my duty to make him happy if I could, but I had another higher duty. I had a duty to my fellow human beings. I refused, and I was right to refuse, to make a mate for the first creature. He was evil. He killed my family. I should have destroyed him, but I failed. A few days ago. I asked you to do it for me. Then I was full of anger and the desire for revenge. Now I ask you again, but this time I ask for good reasons.

'I feel death approaching. I see the spirits of my loved ones around me. I am going to them. Goodbye, Walton! Find you happiness in tranquility. Do not be ambitious, even if your ambition is only the innocent one of making discoveries in science. But why do I say this? I have failed, but another may succeed.'

His eyes closed forever.

Margaret, what can I say about this death? How can I describe my sorrow? My eyes are full of tears... Wait a moment! What was that sound? It is midnight, but I can hear a voice coming from the room where Frankenstein's body lies. I must go and look. Goodnight, my sister.

Great God! An amazing thing has happened! I do not know if I can describe it, but I must. Without it this story would be

incomplete.

I entered the room where Frankenstein's body lay. By the bed stood a creature I cannot find words to describe, a gigantic and horribly ugly figure. As he bent over the body, his face was covered by his long hair. His great white hand was stretched out towards Frankenstein, and he was speaking words of grief and horror. When he heard me coming, he moved towards the window. I asked him to stay.

He looked at me in surprise, then looked again at the body of his creator. 'That is also my victim,' he said. 'His murder is my last crime. My miserable life is finished. Oh, Frankenstein! It is too late to ask your forgiveness.'

At first I thought that I should do as Frankenstein had asked me and kill the monster. Now I felt pity for him, and I was curious. I approached him. I did not dare to look at his face. There was something frightening about his ugliness. 'Yes,' I said, 'It is too late. If you had wanted his forgiveness before, Frankenstein would still be alive.'

'Do you think I did not feel sorry before? I hated my crimes. They caused me great pain, but a dreadful selfishness made me commit them. Once I was good, but misery made me evil. That change caused me great pain. After the death of Clerval, I returned to Switzerland. I pitied Frankenstein, and I hated myself. But when I heard that he hoped to be happy, I was filled with anger and envy. I was the slave of my own revenge. After Elizabeth died, evil became my good. The completion of my evil plan was all I desired, and now it is complete. There lies my last victim!'

I was moved by his words. Then I remembered Frankenstein's words: 'He speaks well and his words might persuade you, as they once persuaded me. Do not trust him.' When I looked at the dead body of my friend, I felt angry 'Devil!' I said. 'How dare you come here and cry over your crimes when it is too late! You feel no pity. You are only miserable because you can torment him no longer.'

'No!' cried the monster. 'But I understand why you think that. It does not matter what you think. I expect sympathy from nobody. When I remember the crimes. I have committed, I cannot believe that I am the same creature who once was full of love and goodness. The fallen angel becomes the devil.

'You have heard my story, but you have heard it from Frankenstein, and he did not know everything. Even while I destroyed his hopes, I was miserable. I still desired love and friendship. I am a sinner, but all mankind sinned against me.

'It is true that I am evil. I murdered lovely and innocent people. I ruined my creator. You hate me, but you do not hate me as much as I hate myself.

'Now I will die. I will leave your ship on the ice raft that brought me here. I will go to the most northern point of the earth. I will burn myself to death, so that no one can learn from my dead body how to create another like myself. I will die. I will stop feeling misery. My creator is dead, and when I too am dead we will both be forgotten. Years ago, when I first felt the sunshine heard the birds sing, I would have been sorry to die. Now death is my only comfort.

'Goodbye! I leave you, the last human being I will ever see. Goodbye, Frankenstein! I caused you much pain, but I felt more pain that you did.'

He jumped from the cabin window onto the ice raft that lay close to the ship. He soon disappeared from sight and was lost in darkness and distance.

- THE END -

Hope you have enjoyed the reading!