

# **FRANKENSTEIN**

by  
Guillermo del Toro

Based on the novel  
by  
Mary Shelley

Directed by  
Guillermo del Toro

**FINAL SHOOTING SCRIPT**  
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**DARKNESS**

Over a BLACK screen, music begins-

**A SIGN ONSCREEN: OVERTURE**

EXT. FROZEN LANDSCAPE - DAY

A WHITE LIMBO OF MIST. A SNOWSTORM. White flakes rush by the lens.

CAMERA creeps in on a VAST landscape. The sound of ICE PICKS-- dozens of them: hard at work. A few lanterns and bonfires pepper the white canvas.

The SUN shines, high above: a hazy crown of light.

Super: **NORTH POLE, 1857.**

Within this frozen limbo- a dark, massive shape-- the ship HORIZONT.

A Three Mast ship, its hull encased, embedded, in fact, in the ice, firmly in the grasp of a sheet of blue, rigid, crystalline ice claws, connecting to what seems like a continent of it.

Its hull is pierced and wedged in the translucent grip. SAILORS work hard to liberate it.

CAPTAIN ALFRED ANDERSON: A powerful Danish Seaman, chiseled and distant. Unwavering. He inspects the work.

CAPTAIN ANDERSON approaches the ship's stern. Massive KEROSENE bonfires burn there, illuminating CANVAS TENTS as sailors warm themselves and trade equipment- all under the watchful eye of CHIEF OFFICER LARSEN.

*[Note: The dialogue between DANISH CHARACTERS is in Danish, subtitled.]*

CHIEF OFFICER LARSEN  
Captain- the men are hungry, and  
exhausted- we cannot keep up this pace  
without consequence...

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
The more we delay the labor, the firmer  
the grasp of the ice will become.

CONTINUED:

CHIEF OFFICER LARSEN  
Respectfully, Sir, the men need  
assurances-

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
Assurances?

CHIEF OFFICER LARSEN  
Yes, Sir- that we will head back to St. Petersburg once we free the ship. They don't think we'll be seaworthy for long- and they want to know-

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
It is not their place- or yours- to think- or determine our course. We signed up for a mission and we will see it to completion. We will reach the furthest North. No other choice.

(beat)  
Rotate each group: two hour shifts to eat and sleep.

CHIEF OFFICER LARSEN  
Aye, aye, Sir-

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Captain Anderson- shoeless and exhausted- squeezes ice water out of his socks.

The tip of his toes are inflamed and have turned almost entirely black. He dries them. Wincing in pain as he does so.

An EXPLOSION is heard. He gets up.

EXT. SHIP'S DECK - BOW - NIGHT

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
What was that?

TORFUSSEN  
An explosion, Sir- about two miles away-

The Second Mate (TORFUSSEN) hands him a SPYGLASS.

POV through the lens of a spyglass: Anderson tries to encompass the vast and irregular plains of ice, which seem to have no end.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

But, sure enough, there is a small fire light- flickering.

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
Get the men, and Doctor Udsen-

EXT. FROZEN LANDSCAPE - NIGHT

CAMP at night: Bonfires.

Carrying LIT TORCHES, Captain Anderson, Larsen, and A GROUP OF MEN, including Torfussen, and DOCTOR UDSEN leave the ship encampment.

EXT. ICE FIELD - NIGHT

The Men traverse the ice field. The BONFIRES recede.

EXT. ICE MOUND - NIGHT

They see an abandoned CAMP-

There, a TENT is burning - there is an ABANDONED SLED.

A HUGE STAIN OF BLOOD across the snow.

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
What happened here?

Then- a BLOOD-CURDLING HOWL-

DOCTOR UDSEN  
Captain- there-

They move towards a MAN, injured, emaciated and bearded at the base of a jutting mound.

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
Wolf attack?

DOCTOR UDSEN  
Knife wound on the shoulder. And his hand- is crushed...

Then they see the man's leg: bent- broken, snapped- blood everywhere-

Doctor Udsen pulls a CURVED LEATHER KNIFE-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOCTOR UDSEN (CONT'D)  
Remove his shoe, Larsen-

Larsen obeys: The boot reveals a SILVER FOOT and then-  
A PROSTHETIC LEG.

The Man clings to the Doctor's arm, trembling in fear-

DOCTOR UDSEN (CONT'D)  
Shhh- Shhh- Calm down- Calm down...

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
We should take him to the ship...

LARSEN looks at the Captain- "are you sure?"

A HOWLING- a blood-curdling scream!! And then a horrible voice- not quite human, not quite animal- a guttural, beastly roar:

VOICE  
*Bring him to me!!*

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
To the ship- now!

They put the Man on a stretcher.

Captain Anderson looks back-

-and sees, a LUMBERING, **ENORMOUS CREATURE** rising over a mound!!! Backlit by the moon- smoke and steam engulf and trail its body!!!

EXT. SHIP'S DECK / FROZEN LANDSCAPE - NIGHT

The injured Man is being loaded onto the ship, pulleys haul his stretcher up!

They hear that accursed HOWLING again-

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
Ready the Weapons! On my command!

CHIEF OFFICER LARSEN  
There, Sir!

They see THE CREATURE- rapidly advancing upon them-

They hear that accursed HOWLING again- and an unearthly voice:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CREATURE  
*Bring him to me!!!*

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
Fire!

Three men open fire at the Creature-- it falters but doesn't stop, in fact- it charges!!

CAPTAIN ANDERSON (CONT'D)  
You missed!

CHIEF OFFICER LARSEN  
We did not!

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
Three more!

CREATURE  
*Bring- him to me!!!*

THREE MORE SAILORS step in, aim and-

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
Fire!

The Creature is upon them!

It TOSSES THE MEN like rag dolls. Kills them instantly and effortlessly.

CAPTAIN ANDERSON (CONT'D)  
Everyone- to the deck!!

They flee for the ship, in a panic now-

The Captain climbs up- The Creature close in pursuit- it takes the deck!

And spots the injured Man, rescued-

The Creature's visage is visible for the first time: Pale- oh, so pale- the palest of skins- oyster-grey, in fact- almost pearlescent, with a single gleaming yellow eye- veined in red, and almost beaming in the semi-darkness of a hood! The other eye- an empty socket!

He ROARS- charges!!! SAILORS go for him- attack-

Harpoons, clubs! Shots fired at him!

They are dispatched quickly overboard!!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The tall, gaunt Creature advances-

Larsen opens a side chest, and retrieves a massive BLUNDER-BUSS-style three-barreled gun.

The Creature is heading for the injured Man- torches and lanterns project shadows everywhere, adding to the chaos.

Larsen unloads THREE BARRELS of the Volley gun-

The Creature is blown back and staggers over the railing-

- falling backwards-

- fifteen feet down onto the ice!

The ice CRACKS- the FIRELIGHT illuminates the scene.

The Creature goes for the ladder, which gets retrieved just in time!!!

Furious, the Creature starts banging at the hull!!!

His astounding strength makes THE SHIP ROCK back and forth!!!

Freeing it from the ice partially.

The ship rocks!

BAMMM!! The Creature rocks the ship again.

His feet exert pressure against the ice, cracking under-

CHIEF OFFICER LARSEN  
It's gonna break through the hull, Sir-  
she can't take it much more.

THREE MORE SAILORS peer over the edge of the ship and fire-  
The ice splatters with crimson blood but the Creature carries on!!!

The ice breaks further-

The ship rocks-

They all peer over the edge-

The ice cracks under The Creature's pressure- the ship TILTS, everyone tries to hang on to the railing-

TWO SAILORS shoot at the creature's feet!!! The ICE CRACKS!!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

The ship rocks! Almost upended!!

And then-

Captain Anderson takes the BLUNDERBUSS from LARSEN and climbs his way back to the side-

-He fires the LAST CHAMBER LOAD!!

BREAKING THE ICE by the Creatures's feet!!! The fracture line runs freely now- completing a circle around the Creature!

The ICE GIVES, the Creature turns to see the ice break and turn sideways- the Creature slides into the frigid waters-

He battles gravity for a moment, but the slippery ice surface betrays his grip and seals itself again!

The Creature sinks--

EXT. THE SHIP - NIGHT

The ship rights itself up- slowly-

Everyone regains composure.

EXT. UNDERWATER - NIGHT

The Creature sinks heavily as if loaded with stones-

Soon, it disappears in the polar waters, and into the darkness of the ocean.

EXT. THE SHIP - NIGHT

CAMERA CRANES UP, seeing the ship in its totality, the encampment, the steel gray sky.

CUT TO:

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - DAWN

Doctor Udsen readies his instruments on a surgical table.

We are in a somewhat ample and- by comparison- luxurious cabin: maps, charts and instruments litter the space. An ample CIRCULAR window and bunk-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

On it lies the injured Man: limbs are blackened and desiccated- blood congealed and skin consumed by frostbite.

They REMOVE THE PROTHETIC LEG, reveal a STUMP.

DOCTOR UDSEN

An old wound. The stump has healed, scar even hardened.

CAPTAIN ANDERSON

War?

DOCTOR UDSEN

Whatever war this man fought- he lost. His body is dreadfully emaciated.

He examines the patient.

DOCTOR UDSEN (CONT'D)

Cyanosis spots on his chest- there's liquid in his lungs- he does not have long...

He cuts some bloody bandages and reveals the Man's hands- frostbitten and black.

DOCTOR UDSEN (CONT'D)

His right hand is crushed. I will do my best- but eventually...

MAN

What- are you doing-

The Doctor and the Captain turn- the Man is leaning on an injured elbow as he climbs out of the bed, ever so weakly.

CAPTAIN ANDERSON

English- can you understand English?

The Man nods.

DOCTOR UDSEN

We are trying to save you, my good man.

MAN

Where am I?

CAPTAIN ANDERSON

You are on the Danish Royal Ship Horisont. My name is Captain Alfred Anderson

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MAN  
Put me back on the ice.

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
I don't understand.

MAN  
How many of your men did it kill?

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
Three.

Doctor Udsen hands him a drink.

MAN  
It will come back and kill many more. All  
of you, if necessary- unless you put me  
back on the ice and let it take me.

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
It's over. The body sank- in the frozen  
waters- carried away, probably miles away-  
by the very current that wedges this ship  
into the ice. It is dead.

The Man SMASHES the glass against the wall.

MAN  
It is not! It cannot die! I should know!  
I have tried to destroy it- time and  
again!

(beat)  
Whether you believe me or not- it will  
come back for me. And you have to promise  
me: When it does- You will put me back on  
the ice and let it take me...

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
What manner of creature is that-? And  
what manner of God or devil made him?

A long pause and then:

MAN  
I did. *I made him.*

**SUPER: PART I: VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN**

EXT. SHIP STERN - DAYBREAK

THE SUN RISES- The Men work hard to free the ship from the ice using wedges and hammers.

The Ship rocks.

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - DAYBREAK

The Man looks out the window. He has been cleaned. He is wearing a long cotton shirt and stands on his one good leg- his pant leg folded on the missing one.

Doctor Udsen brings the wooden leg- helps him fit it on.

MAN

I had determined at one time that the memory of my evils should die with me...  
But I must make you understand. That is the only way- the only way you will understand. A complete confession-

(beat)

Some of what I will tell you is fact- some is not- but it is all true...

(beat)

My name is Victor...

(beat)

Victor Frankenstein.

(beat)

It was my father that chose that name-

(beat)

You know what it means?

CAPTAIN ANDERSON

I believe I do. A conqueror. The one that wins it all.

VICTOR adjusts the straps on the wooden leg.

VICTOR

That is what he expected- a laurel on his brow... *It all started with him, I believe... my father... and my mother...*

He closes his eyes and smiles, suffused by peace and warm memories.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLAIRES (V.O.)  
Victor... Victor...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - MAIN ENTRANCE - DAY

CLAIRES, Victor's mother climbs down the stairs- her face hidden by a VEIL- behind her, the SERVANTS assemble.

CLAIRES  
Victor! Victor! Dépêchez-vous de descendre, votre père arrive.

YOUNG VICTOR awaits by a small stone pediment. A carriage is arriving.

Claire extends her GLOVED HANDS- smiles.

Victor joins his mother.

The CARRIAGE stops- and, out of it: a dark male figure, cape flying, hat firmly in place: HIS FATHER (LEOPOLD FRANKENSTEIN).

Aryan, blond and strapping- with piercing blue eyes and aristocratic cheekbones.

He kisses Claire's hand.

LEOPOLD  
Victor...

Victor nods his head.

VICTOR (V.O.)  
My Father was a Baron, and a preeminent Surgeon-

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A long- almost expressionistic- dining table. Father, Mother and Son eat in silence at one end. Wine is poured by silent SERVANTS.

VICTOR (V.O.)  
He had married my mother, largely out of convenience- as her dowry was considerable and her lineage noble.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
*Her family owned large plantations in the South Seas and that furnished my father with the means to preserve his rank and family estate.*

LEOPOLD  
Victor- sit up straight. Elbows off the table.

Leopold slices his steak with extreme precision and care. His hair and sideburns are bright auburn- almost red- and his blue eyes sparkle with steely intelligence.

VICTOR (V.O.)  
*Our raven-black hair, our deep-dark eyes, even our quiet- at times nervous- disposition, seemed to exasperate the man to no end.*

Young Victor eats mostly vegetables. Claire smiles quietly at her son, she seems satiated- puts her cutlery down. A SERVANT is going to pick it up- Leopold stops her-

LEOPOLD  
Leave it.  
(beat)  
Put some effort into it, Claire, dear.  
The salts in the meat will enrich your blood- for the baby. You eat for him too, remember? My son-

YOUNG VICTOR (PRELAP)  
"Guardian angel. Sweet companion. Stand by my side and do not leave me..."

INT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - MOTHER'S CHAMBERS - DAWN

YOUNG VICTOR  
"...In my waking hours, in the deepest night. Under your mantle, shelter me. Under your gaze, protect me. And never, ever, desert me..."

Young Victor prays at the feet of a CARVED ARCHANGEL. He can hear a LOUD and VIOLENT discussion in the next room.

VICTOR (V.O.)  
*I would hear them- through the wall- arguing incessantly... Their voices filled me with fear... Fired my imagination...*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Claire enters the room.

TIME CUT. Victor lies in a regal canopy bed with his mother. He looks at the SILK above his head and leans on her chest-listens to her heart...

YOUNG VICTOR  
After my brother is born-

CLAIREE  
William... Guillaume- mon Chéri...

YOUNG VICTOR  
After William is born: M'aimeras-tu  
autant que tu m'aimes maintenant?

CLAIREE  
Si une telle chose est possible-

Victor closes his eyes, pressing his ear against his Mother, and hears the THUMP-THUMP of her heart, and the baby's...

INT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - KITCHEN - DAY

Busy kitchen: cooking, kneading dough, cutting vegetables...

A SCULLERY MAID pours milk in a glass. A BUTLER takes it in a tray.

INT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - MARBLE LOBBY - DAY

The Butler carries the milk up the marble staircase and into a corridor.

LEOPOLD (V.O.)  
Very well, Victor- we can move to the  
next subject...

INT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - LIBRARY - DAY

The Butler serves Victor the milk.

Young Victor consults a small ANATOMICAL VENUS of Ivory, opens her belly.

He is in AN OLD LIBRARY- two levels, with ladders and balconies and reading tables everywhere.

Young Victor is reading at one of the tables. A BUTLER brings him his milk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEOPOLD

List, accurately as you can, the ancient classification of the humors in the human body-

Leopold questions him from a ladder- he is putting away a book.

YOUNG VICTOR

Blood, Black Bile, Yellow Bile and Phlegm.

LEOPOLD

And how many do we recognize today, Victor?

YOUNG VICTOR

Blood and Bile only, Father.

Victor drinks his milk.

LEOPOLD

Average male heart- weight?

YOUNG VICTOR

280 to 310 grams...

LEOPOLD

Average female heart- weight?

Leopold climbs down. In his hand we notice a switch-thin cane.

YOUNG VICTOR

230 to 280 grams, Father-

LEOPOLD

Why would you say that is- the difference of mass in the female heart? Depth of emotions, a tendency towards the melancholic?

YOUNG VICTOR

Mass- volume of blood, Father. Muscular irrigation.

LEOPOLD

Quite. There is no spiritual function to tissue, Victor-- no emotion to a muscle- Now- describe the main function of the tricuspid valve.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

YOUNG VICTOR  
The valve is there to prevent- to- impede-

LEOPOLD  
Yes-?

YOUNG VICTOR  
I- I- don't recall, Father- But I'm sure  
I will remember-

LEOPOLD  
I'm sure you will. Ivory does not  
bleed, Victor. Flesh does- by the time  
you remember a fact- your patient  
could be dead. You understand?  
(beat)  
The tricuspid valve prevents reflux  
of blood into the vena cava.

He raises the cane. Young Victor extends his hands-

LEOPOLD (CONT'D)  
No. Not your hands. Not anymore. They  
are now to be the instruments of your  
craft and will. You must care for them  
always. Your face, however- is vanity.

He crosses the boy's face with the cane. A Fleeting shade of  
remorse crosses Leopold's visage.

LEOPOLD (CONT'D)  
You carry my name and you will carry  
my profession- you shall not wear  
either of them down.

EXT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - FRONT LAWN - DUSK

The front lawn of the Villa: behind it the ALPS, majestic,  
remote, rise above the landscape.

Young Victor plays cards with Claire, sitting on the grass.  
They laugh. Servants are nearby.

They eat HARDBOILED EGGS seasoned with silver spoonfuls of  
salt.

Young Victor peels an egg. Bites into it.

The sun blinds Claire- she shields her eyes and then-  
Grows pale. She suddenly clutches her stomach.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Falls down to the ground.

Leopold rushes to her side- a SCREAM PRE-LAPS:

EXT. CEMETERY HILL - DUSK

SNOWFLAKES dancing in the air.

A BONE WHITE, CARVED COFFIN goes by a row of MOURNERS in the cold air of Autumn.

Young Victor covers his mother's face with a mortuary mask. He is wearing his CRIMSON BOW around the neck.

Leopold holds a newborn baby in his arms.

The GRAVEDIGGERS lower the coffin into the hole.

Young Victor stands by the grave.

VICTOR (V.O.)

*She, whom I saw every day and whose very existence appeared a part of my own, was gone-- the brightness of her eye, extinguished- the sound of her voice muffled by the earth. Her smile devoured by worms.*

EXT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - STONE BRIDGE LAWN - DAY

Leopold plays with WILLIAM (age 4), riding a PONY- SERVANTS surround them, preparing a PICNIC.

VICTOR (V.O.)

*William was quickly favored by my father. He was the Sun, I was the thunder cloud, he was all smiles and I was all frowns.*

Victor watches from a distance, hidden in the trees.

VICTOR (V.O.)

*There was something more... or something, rather, was missing... You see, my mother had died at the hands of the most preeminent doctor of his day... my Father...*

INT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - LIBRARY - DUSK

Victor plays with the Ivory Venus-

VICTOR (V.O.)  
*He disliked her intensely- as he did me... Therefore an idea took shape in my mind. Inevitable, unavoidable- day and night- until it became truth.*

LEOPOLD  
Define the Circulatory system as enunciated in De Motu Cordis if you will...

Silence and then-

YOUNG VICTOR  
You killed her.

LEOPOLD  
Pardon?

YOUNG VICTOR  
You let her die. Did you not?

Leopold looks at him, dispassionate. Entirely unruffled.

LEOPOLD  
I did everything in my power to save her, little Hamlet. You must know that.

YOUNG VICTOR  
So you failed, then.

LEOPOLD  
No one could have saved her. No one can conquer death-

YOUNG HUNTER  
I will. I will conquer it-  
Everything you know, I will know-  
and more-

Leopold tenses. Puts the book down. Takes the cane- but does not use it.

LEOPOLD  
I see- we've done quite enough for today.

He heads out- Young Victor gets up- grabs the switch cane.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

YOUNG VICTOR  
Father- You did not hit me.  
(beat)  
You always hit me- if I'm wrong...

INT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - MOTHER'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

The WOODEN ARCHANGEL by the fireplace looks down at a kneeling Young Victor.

He goes to his mother's bed- William is already asleep there.

He looks up at the silk canopy and falls asleep.

VICTOR (V.O.)  
*I was born anew that night. I had a vision-*

FIRE SURROUNDS HIM - He closes his eyes.

VICTOR (V.O.)  
*I saw for the first time, the Dark Angel- and it made me a promise.*

A vision of a FIERY ARCHANGEL with Crimson robes made of blood and shadow.

VICTOR (V.O.)  
*I was to protect myself and William from the beast. Always- and in exchange, I would have command over the very forces of life and death. I would create life and prevent death- I would become every ounce the surgeon my father was and I would even surpass him. But before any of that could come to be...*  
(beat)  
*I had to kill him...*

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - DAWN

VICTOR  
What you must think of me...

Captain Anderson and Doctor Udsen look at Victor in shock.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
But the vision presented itself with  
such Clarity. It was clearer than  
anything in my dreams or waking hours.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - LIBRARY - DAY

Young Victor slides on the ladder, consulting volume-

VICTOR (V.O.)  
*But how? How could I erase this  
detestable brute in a single, elegant  
stroke?*

After volume, of medical syllabi and poison manuals.

VICTOR (V.O.)  
*And then, she came to me- to my  
assistance- the dark lady- the quiet  
death... I found her composition in an  
old Italian volume about poisons...*

EXT. CEMETERY HILL - DUSK

VICTOR (V.O.)  
*The unlikely combination of root  
extracts, potassium and alpine black  
lichen... a modest, almost resentful  
little plant that grew in the shade of  
granite, caressed by the cold...*

Young Victor cuts black lichen from the base of a dark stone mass.

VICTOR (V.O.)  
*To say from where I harvested the  
ruthless remedy... would be poetic-  
perhaps even boastful- but I  
harvested it all the same...*

CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal Young Victor walking away from the black granite stone of his Mother's GRAVE.

INT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - KITCHEN - BLUE DAWN

Young Victor puts on his MOTHER'S GLOVES as he boils the lichen and some chemicals and powders from his father's study.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR (V.O.)  
*It yielded its essence- just like my mother had relinquished hers to the ground... the plant had sapped her spirit and nourished her way out of the earth... to me.*

(beat)  
*And with it, my father's fate was sealed.*

INT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - LEOPOLD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Young Victor approaches the bed. Watches his father sleeping. Victor carefully-

Accurately- pours two drops of liquid into his ear. His Father stirs. Victor hides.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - DINING ROOM - DAY

Young Victor consumes breakfast with Leopold and William- some pureed pear and eggs.

Victor eyes his father with great hatred. He watches him chew and masticate-

Break down gristle and bone and wipe the juices of his repast with white linen napkins.

Suddenly, Leopold pauses- he seems faint, indisposed- scratches his ear.

Victor watches, excitedly: "Here it comes..."

Leopold uses a napkin in his ear: A SPOT OF BLOOD stains it.

He touches his ear. Gets up. Leans on the table. A drop of blood hits the WHITE LINEN. He tries to contain the bleeding with a napkin- but the bleeding continues.

Victor watches, enraptured.

Leopold now starts hemorrhaging from ears and nose.

He takes a few steps forward, and then realizes something-

He turns to face Victor.

Victor stands, facing him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Leopold knows-

Takes a step forward.

But it is too late. It's done.

He falls to the ground.

Victor stops William from going to his father's side- *Wait*:

VICTOR  
Turn around. Do *exactly as I say*.  
Do not look back-

He raises his finger in front of William's face. William nods.

Victor then stands by his father. He crouches- turns him, so they can see eye-to-eye.

Victor smiles. Waves him goodbye-

Leopold dies.

CUT TO:

EXT. CEMETERY HILL - DUSK

A CARVED EBONY COFFIN goes by a row of MOURNERS.

Young Victor seals the coffin with a death mask.

Through a window on top: LEOPOLD.

Victor holds William by the hand. They walk away-

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - DAWN

VICTOR  
*Saved a life- at the cost of  
another...*

Captain Anderson and Doctor Undsen looks at Victor in shock.

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
You were a child... This crime-

VICTOR  
*Crimes, Captain- I am not yet finished.  
Much more carnage will ensue...*

EXT. FROZEN LANDSCAPE - DAWN

Quiet. Still. Eternal and then-

BAMMM!! The ice explodes- a fist breaks through it like a piston.

The ice breaks, it almost "folds" as if hinged- two long, wiry arms with pale skin extend like spider legs on the ice and The Creature emerges from the icy waters. He regards the horizon-

He now has TWO FULL EYES. The empty socket has regrown a new BLOOD-INFUSED organ.

And then, he starts to walk full of rage and determination-

UNSTOPPABLE. Steady, almost mechanical. Plumes of steam emerging from its gaping, thin lips like a locomotive heading to its destination.

VICTOR (V.O.)  
*My downfall started soon enough. And, like all divine justice, it was swift.*

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - DAY

VICTOR  
Two revolts and a fire on my Mother's plantations dwindled the family's fortune. We kept the estate but lost everything else... William went to one side of the family in Vienna, and I to Edinburgh- and there, for decades, I tried to- expand the narrow limits of Academia.

He smiles.

INT. LECTURING THEATRE, MEDICAL SCHOOL - DAY

A HAND comes up in frame, holding a RED BALL.

VICTOR  
Life!

This is the adult VICTOR: 34 years old but with the intensity of genius: unruly, Byronic hair and sideburns frame his dark eyes and clear brow.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
(repeats, softer)  
*This is... Life... Gentlemen.*

A round lecturing theatre, with lecterns and an operating table at its center- obscured by a circular ring of curtains.

Super: Edinburgh, 1856.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
We are born... *propelled into existence by the hand of God.*

He throws the ball in the air, high-

The PROFESSORS and PUPILS follow the ball's arc.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
And no sooner do we rise...

The Ball falls back into his hand.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
...than we fall...  
(raises the ball)  
Death. Cradled now- by the hand of *Man.*

He looks at the entire theatre.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
And in between that rise and fall: our humble purview.

He walks around, exchanging looks with a bunch of Professors. The Students all follow his every word and every move- like a concert- like a Rock star on stage.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
Birth is not in our hands- is it?  
Conception- that spark- the animation of thought and soul... that is in God's hand... *God.*

He raises one hand and exchanges the ball to the other.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
But death... now- there lies the challenge.

He tosses the ball. Catches it without even looking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
That should be our sole concern.  
(switches ball hand to hand)  
Who are we to do so? We are not Gods,  
are we?  
(beat)  
We must be... the way we conduct  
ourselves- the reverence we demand...  
Why should we cater to the demands of  
disease- or the appetite of the  
maggots?

Applause, murmuring.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
But if we are to behave like Gods... we  
must- at the very least- deliver  
miracles, wouldn't you say? Ignite a  
divine spark in all these young minds.

Murmuring, clapping.

Taking a seat amidst the cacophonous crowd: HERR HEINRICH HARLANDER: a flamboyant, prepossessed man in his early sixties. In his ring-covered hands: a delicately carved cane: its handle, a naked, reclining woman.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
It is our duty to teach these students  
defiance rather than obedience. Show  
them that man can raise a fist to  
creation- shout at the hurricane.  
(beat)  
Stop death. Not slow it down- stop it  
entirely-

The Students CHEER!!! Victor tosses the ball to PROFESSOR MAURUS, a kind-looking man. PROFESSOR KREMPE, an august-looking man in his early sixties, slams a hammer on a gavel.

PROFESSOR KREMPE  
Silence! Silence! How exactly do you  
propose to teach what is impossible,  
Doctor?

VICTOR  
By showing you all, Professor Krempe,  
that it is not so-

He unveils a body on the slab- its a TORSO- one ARM and a HEAD flayed open and reassembled-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

The monstrous creation is connected to a few machines and batteries around it.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

Composite subject- the body- that of a shopkeeper- delivered mere moments after expiration. The brain laid bare- but functional... The spinal branches and vagal nerves: intact...

He hands them a LEATHER FOLIO filled with exquisite anatomical notations and sketches.

Harlander lights a cigarette.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

You may observe the hair- thin scars- no coarse stitching needed by my own technique- the arm, you see? That comes from another specimen- a Carpenter: muscles, ligaments, nerves all connected now.

He turns on four batteries. The body spasms, and its arm extends- The eyes look around-

VICTOR (CONT'D)

The spasmodic movement comes from the preserved connection of the brain and the nerves-- this is not new...

There is a wild MURMUR amongst the crowd-

VICTOR (CONT'D)

However- the flow of energy through the body follows a different pattern. An Eastern notion called "Qi" consigned in the Nei Jing-

He points at different ACUPUNCTURE NEEDLES inserted in various positions of the body.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

It considers the flow of vital energy both within and without. I am utilizing nine kinds of needles in six of the over a hundred meridians of the body...

Victor "tunes" some of the long needles and, in response, some parts of the exposed spinal cord and the arm and hand react accordingly.

KREMPE, gets up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

PROFESSOR STOKELD  
This is a hearing, Doctor- not a  
carnival act-

PROFESSOR MAURUS  
You are not helping your cause, Victor-  
your notions are intriguing- but this-  
Galvanic trickery will simply not  
do...

Victor walks to him, ball in hand.

VICTOR  
Trickery?

He throws the ball in the air and the body's hand snatches!

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
That is not trickery. That is a decision-  
motor coordination- between the eye of  
one dead man, and the arm of another!  
Infused with a new will- and the  
rudiments of understanding...

Harlander leans in.

PROFESSOR STOKELD  
What in God's name are you talking  
about?! Understanding?? On a brain  
that already died?

VICTOR  
(taps it)  
Release... now... Please

The Body releases the ball and it bounces back. A murmur and  
a commotion ripples the hall.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
Please always helps.

Laughter- riotous laughter! Faculty Members gasp and get up,  
others feel sick. Some students rush to the exits. Others  
lean in-

PROFESSOR KREMPE  
(at Victor)  
Turn that off at once! At once! You  
charlatan!!

VICTOR  
This is the future!! This is possible!  
Why not study it?! Why not quantify it?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

PROFESSOR STOKELD  
This is unholy! An abomination- an  
obscenity!!

A near-mutiny ensues!! Violent-

PROFESSOR MAURUS  
God gives life, and God takes it, Victor!

Victor picks up his designs and annotations in a haste,  
snatching them from the professor's hands.

VICTOR  
Perhaps God is inept! Or hard of  
hearing? Perhaps he is not infallible-  
perhaps he needs help from us- *his*  
*greatest creation*- to amend his  
mistakes?

(to the students)  
The one thing we know God not to be-  
is modest- or quiet- or prudent. Do  
not let these old fools extinguish  
your voice!! Nature will yield  
answers if coaxed by disobedience!  
Unbridled by fear!

He swats away Professor Krempe's hand. They fight-  
His papers fall everywhere.

The RED BALL rolls on the floor and comes to a halt at the  
feet of Harlander.

PROFESSOR KREMPE  
Whatever that thing is- it is not  
truly alive.

VICTOR  
If it is not- then surely its death will  
be inconsequential...

He takes a scalpel and sinks it in the heart of the HALF  
BODY!! It rattles and dies.

Everyone is in shock.

EXT. EDINBURGH - MAIN STREET - DAY

Thunder, light rain. URCHINS lower wooden planks for  
GENTLEMEN and LADIES to step over the mud, steaming haggis  
is slopped in wooden bowls. Victor crosses.

EXT. BUTCHER ALLEY / COURTYARD - DAY

BUTCHERS EVERYWHERE- slicing, chopping, discarding entrails. The alley is running afoul with murky water and blood.

Victor enters a COURTYARD and there, he finds Harlander waiting for him... Harlander tips his hat:

HARLANDER

Baron Victor Von Frankenstein... My name is Heinrich Harlander- I carry with me, a brief letter of introduction-

He produces a small letter.

HARLANDER (CONT'D)

From your brother- William...

Victor opens the letter- examines it briefly.

HARLANDER (CONT'D)

I asked for the privilege of your acquaintance. It will take but a moment of your time... please...

Victor opens the door-

INT. VICTOR'S APARTMENT - DAY

Impossibly cluttered, impossibly crooked. Crammed with textbooks, equipment.

Victor enters- takes a few NOTICES OF EVICTION and PAST DUE notices from his door.

Harlander shakes his wet clothes off- looks around- examines a SMALL, DAVINCI-ESQUE DIARY full of anatomical drawings left on a table, and exquisite WAX SCULPTURES around him-

HARLANDER

You did this?

SEVERAL WAX studies represent Victor's ideas of Anatomy and beauty.

VICTOR

Yes. They are just roadmaps really- a way to- organize my thoughts...

HARLANDER

You are an artist.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR  
You could say that-

HARLANDER  
I dabble a bit, myself.

Victor puts the letter away.

VICTOR  
So- William is coming to see me, is that it...?

HARLANDER  
In a matter of days, yes. William wants to introduce you to his fiancee...

Victor uses his last log and tinder to light the fireplace.

On the side of Harlander's forehead, TWO DROPS of black tincture slide over his pale skin. He wipes them off discreetly.

He hands him a handful of photographs.

HARLANDER (CONT'D)  
My niece, as it happens. My protege- Elizabeth Harlander. A nice young lady- fresh from convent life and- I assure you- a most pious and auspicious addition to your family...

In the photographs: a Beautiful Woman, ELIZABETH- and an ADULT WILLIAM FRANKENSTEIN-

HARLANDER (CONT'D)  
The photographs are mine... I took them.  
*En plein air*- I do better in a studio.  
(then)  
William has become quite successful in the world of finances. He is making a name for himself.

Similar in appearance to Victor but with wide, liquid eyes full of compassion and vivacious intelligence.

Victor smiles. He removes his gloves and takes cream from an open glass jar. Massages his knuckles.

VICTOR  
A name? For himself?  
(beat)  
I am afraid that name is shared by both of us, whether we like it, or not...  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

VICTOR (CONT'D)

(beat)

Why would he send you? What? Is he too successful to present himself to me? He may be in charge of the family's assets but I am still the eldest and you may remind him of that.

HARLANDER

Nothing like that- I asked for the privilege, Baron... I read your article in The Lancet and found it brave, bold. Enticing, even...

VICTOR

Enticing- truly? Many would disagree...

He sits on a sofa- opens the milk bottle. Drinks straight from it.

HARLANDER

You really believe you can do it?  
Assemble a man- a full new body- and give it life?

VICTOR

You saw it today.

HARLANDER

What I saw today was a crucifixion, really. You were done for- before you uttered a word... You know that, yes?

VICTOR

I still showed them-

HARLANDER

What?

VICTOR

The Truth.

HARLANDER

They will forget it by supper time.

He sits by Victor on the sofa.

VICTOR

And you- what did you think?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HARLANDER

What you showed today was determined not by your reach but the limitations of your peers, and hampered by your own exuberance.

VICTOR

No, no- *what did you think-?*

HARLANDER

It was brilliant.

VICTOR

It was. I know.

HARLANDER

But- you are like... *a child*, so excited- clutching your new pet so tight- that you strangle it. This while you are courting powers so vast- powers reserved only for the Gods.

(beat)

That is why I worry- *about you*. Can you keep your exuberance reigned in. Are you going to deliver your fire, Prometheus? Or will you burn your hands before you do?

*Touché.* Harlander places his hand on Victor's leg- Victor gets up.

VICTOR

Quite. Please do not think me rude- but, my day has proven long enough and I believe myself totally unfit for the company of strangers- So- if there is nothing more...

HARLANDER

Ah, but there is- much more.

(beat)

In exchange for your time and attention, I have devised a *temptation*.

Harlander produces the RED BALL.

HARLANDER (CONT'D)

I have taken fashionable quarters in Edinburgh. Three days from now, we are to meet with William and Elizabeth.

He tosses him the ball.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

HARLANDER (CONT'D)  
That evening, I will show you  
something extraordinary. I will change  
your destiny.

CUT TO:

EXT./INT. CONVENT - DUSK

A CARRIAGE, arriving to a Convent in the middle of a  
beautiful field.

A DOZEN NUNS work on ROSE BUSHES, preening and pruning with  
gardening kits..

A door opens and the AUTOMATIC FOLDING STEPS extend out-

The RIDING BOOTS of WILLIAM FRANKENSTEIN step out. He is  
dressed as a landowner and gentleman- in earth tones and  
tasteful autumnal colors- he has a noble, placid brow and  
the watery, gleaming eyes of a child that has known pain,  
but retains nobility. He possesses a tenderness entirely  
absent from Victor's countenance.

He knocks on the door and he is ushered in by TWO NUNS and a  
MOTHER SUPERIOR.

William uncovers his head.

MOTHER SUPERIOR  
Wait here.

He sits in a GOTHIC WOODEN CHAIR.

INT. CONVENT - CHAPEL - DUSK

A CHORUS singing- A ROW OF NOVICES wait to reach an altar  
made of ornate WOODEN FRAMES and MIRRORS reflecting the sun.

On it: a life-size CRUCIFIXION with a semi-nude Christ.

Wounds, exposed bone- greenish skin. Evidently the remains  
after the crucifixion... but it's both eroticized and  
forensic.

One of the Novices, ELIZABETH reaches the altar at last...

ELIZABETH  
In the mystery of your flesh, your  
wounds, your blood, I give myself to  
thee, my Lord...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She kisses the statue's feet with perhaps a bit too much passion. A sensual kiss on the nails and the wounds.

She looks up to the wound on the chest. On the mirrors: her face and the whipped, bloodied, back of the Christ. She is fascinated, even aroused.

MOTHER SUPERIOR  
Sister Elizabeth-

She turns.

MOTHER SUPERIOR (CONT'D)  
Your fiancee awaits...

William smiles at her.

CUT TO:

INT. HARLANDER'S LIBRARY - DUSK

Harlander places a PEACH in a MEMENTO MORI with a Skull, Bones, Fruits and Flowers. A PLUMP NYMPH, leans on a marble column.

He goes to a LARGE FORMAT CAMERA and readies for exposure.

He exposes the negative, looks at his watch- then covers the lens.

HARLANDER  
For God's sake don't bite the peach- we  
have very few left- and try not to move!

Victor (a LEATHER BINDER and his DIARY under his arm) enters with a BUTLER.

BUTLER  
Baron Victor Frankenstein, Sir.

HARLANDER  
Welcome, Baron-  
(aside)  
We will continue tomorrow- hand that  
peach back.

Victor examines a few daguerrotypes and Tintypes on the table. Harlander eats the peach-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARLANDER (CONT'D)  
A young art- photography- but a  
passion for me- I believe in the  
future- look always to the future-  
(beat)  
Did you bring your papers?

Victor nods.

TIME CUT:

Harlander examines the diary and papers.

HARLANDER (CONT'D)  
You are extraordinary-

VICTOR  
Thank You-

HARLANDER  
I believe in you. And I believe I can  
help you... both as a patron and a  
partner...

VICTOR  
Pray elaborate-

HARLANDER  
You are using the nervous system to  
deliver the surge of energy, are you not?

VICTOR  
That is correct.

HARLANDER  
And thus the sustainability of the  
life force you command is brief- yes? It  
wanes- evaporates?

Victor inhales and nods quietly.

HARLANDER (CONT'D)  
At the lecture- you ended the  
demonstration out of pride- but  
really- because the Galvanic  
life force was already fading- did  
you not?

A BUTLER brings a tray with two glasses: Victor drinks some  
milk; Harlander a glass of claret.

VICTOR  
Are you, yourself a surgeon, Sir?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HARLANDER

Once upon a time. Army surgeon. Not a particularly skilled one, but- through those connections I secured the rudiments of my fortune: I own a few ammunition factories.

VICTOR

An arms merchant?

HARLANDER

A realist.

(beat)

The common folk can always be persuaded to crush each other's skulls. The world provides the reason and I provide the stone.

He grabs Victor's knee.

HARLANDER (CONT'D)

Are you familiar with the Evelyn Tables?

VICTOR

Acquired by Sir John Evelyn- there are four planks- meticulous dissections- some of the oldest in Europe- presenting the veins, nerves and arteries of cadavers-

HARLANDER

Right- but- there is a fifth one. The most compelling one...

INT. HARLANDER'S ANTE ROOM - DUSK

They approach a large EASEL, covered by CRIMSON SILK.

Flanking it, a half-hidden image of THE RIDDLE OF THE SPHINX and an alabaster statue of LAOCOÖN. Other works of art lie in crates and are covered by tarps.

He uncovers the easel. Victor is astounded:

On the easel is a plank- both a work of art and an anatomical marvel:

Roughly 4x7 feet and displayed vertically- reddish in hue and showing a human outlined blooming the entire lymphatic system, like branches on a tree. Each detail is flesh rendered unto the wood- varnished and lacquered.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARLANDER

Exquisite- is it not? Flesh rendered unto wood- the cadaver lies on the plank and is peeled away, layer by layer: the remaining tissue lacquered with resin unto the wood...

Victor admires the table- its lacquered traceries.

VICTOR

Where did you acquire it?

HARLANDER

Padua. I was a field surgeon in the battlefield- I exchanged some muskets and gunpowder for it. It showcases the lymphatic system. The Muslim medics called it "The Secret Circulatory System" It moves a mere three liters of liquid but- its a vast network-

(beat)

Now- for you- for us- the important variation is *here-*

He points with his cane at twin branches surrounding the heart.

HARLANDER (CONT'D)

A hidden lymph structure- heretofore unknown to us- surrounding the heart- "The Ninth Configuration" - Delicate. Almost Ethereal- a strip that coils back unto itself and can distribute and store energy-

Harlander looks at Victor.

HARLANDER (CONT'D)

If you can reach it, without destroying the surrounding tissue-

Victor turns Harlander- presses his fingers on his back.

VICTOR

Not the front- The back: The spinal column- upper Thoracic curvature-

HARLANDER

Yes- yes- of course-

Victor turns.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

VICTOR

The flow of energy- scarring and regeneration- beyond anyone's imagination...

HARLANDER

Eternal life. And I would endow your pursuit. Unlimited resources.

VICTOR

And in exchange?

Harlander turns to the RIDDLE OF THE SPHINX- contemplative- as if looking at a landscape out of a window.

HARLANDER

Oh- no need to be indelicate, I beg you. We are kindred spirits. Searchers of truth and transcendence. I may, in time, ask a favor in return- and the privilege to record your process for posterity-

VICTOR

I work alone.

HARLANDER

I will be quiet.

(beat)

But this will happen *if*, and only *if*, you agree to my full patronage.

Victor thinks- long and hard.

BUTLER

William Frankenstein and your niece, Herr Harlander.

HARLANDER

Go- go-

(beat)

But- by all means- don't be reasonable now- *that would be a shame...*

INT. HARLANDER'S RECEPTION ROOM - NIGHT

Victor is warmly received by William- they embrace.

WILLIAM

Victor, Victor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR  
Oh, William, William- Oh- Let me look at  
you! How you have grown!

WILLIAM  
Through no merit of my own. You look  
well, Victor.

(beat)  
May I introduce the woman I am to marry:  
Lady Elizabeth Harlander...

She raises her veil and reveals her face.

Victor is transfixed by her.

VICTOR  
Absolutely delighted, *sister*.

INT. HARLANDER'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Dinner is even more decadent. Gold cutlery, the finest  
china. Wine in crystal glasses. A LARGE FIREPLACE roars.

WILLIAM  
I cannot say, Victor, that I was  
shocked when you were expelled... but  
the manner and virulence of your  
expulsion...  
(beat)  
Uncalled for, I'm sure...

VICTOR  
No- I earned it. I made it a point to  
earn it- wouldn't you say, Herr  
Harlander?

He smiles- a roguish grin.

HARLANDER  
It was quite an exit, I assure you!  
(beat)  
I hired William to assist us- find  
suitable quarters for your experiments-  
deal with practical matters... *If you  
agree... of course...*

VICTOR  
Of course...

Elizabeth succumbs neither to Victor's charm, lofty ideas or  
his arrogance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIAM

Why should you provoke them? Why not just carry on- without calling attention to yourself in such a manner?

VICTOR

How safe- even by your standards. You almost sound like Father, William.

Looks at Elizabeth.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

He was a most tactful man- *Father*. Precise- *measured*. And I, on the other hand, fail to understand why modesty or discretion are considered virtues at all.

(beat)

Such a *tense* condition- modesty.

WILLIAM

Victor has always been one to harvest attention- even as children, I mitigated his voice by staying silent. Perhaps too much, and far too many times. Wouldn't you say, Victor?

VICTOR

If death can be vanquished, once and for all- why whisper it?

William and Harlander chuckle. DESSERT arrives- CUSTARD WITH SLICED PEACHES.

Victor looks at Elizabeth, who nods and smiles.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

You smile-

ELIZABETH

If I did- please excuse me for it.

VICTOR

You are amused.

ELIZABETH

I must be. Yes.

VICTOR

Yes- but amused by what, exactly- my ideas?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLIAM

Be forewarned, dear brother, that a question to my Elizabeth will *invariably* provoke an answer-

Victor locks eyes with Elizabeth. Harlander takes note.

VICTOR

I would welcome it- an answer. Are my ideas not clear?

ELIZABETH

You certainly express them loudly enough.

VICTOR

Are they not worthwhile, then?

ELIZABETH

Ideas are not worthwhile by themselves, I don't believe. Not until measured by the very instruments of their execution... and in the world at large.

VICTOR

Enlighten me please-

ELIZABETH

Take the War, for example-

HARLANDER

Ah-ha! William- may I entice you to some cigars and brandy in my study? Surely you have heard my niece expound on this matter before?

(beat)

If you will excuse us... And try the peaches- they are delicious...

William gets up. Addresses Elizabeth briefly.

WILLIAM

Would you terribly mind, dear?

She shakes her head: "No"

Victor remains.

VICTOR

Pray carry on. Ideas...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ELIZABETH

Well: Honor, country, valor. These surely are worthwhile, elevated ideas by themselves. Wouldn't you agree?

Victor nods.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

And nevertheless men are dying for them. In a decidedly un-elevated way, you see? Face down in the mud, choking on blood, screaming in pain. Men that were fathers, brothers or sons to someone out there... Men that were fed, cleaned, nursed and schooled into the world by their mothers- and they were warned not to lie, told not to step outside without a coat- lest they would catch a cold. Only to fall on a battlefield far away from those that provoked these tragedies. Those men remain at home: untouched by blood or bayonet. Their skin un-pierced, their blankets, warm and clean.

(beat)

That is what happens when ideas are pursued by fools.

VICTOR

Are you are calling me one?

ELIZABETH

*If you know the answer to that question, then you are no fool and thus, need no apology. But if you don't- you don't deserve one.*

(gets up)

Now, run to your brandy and cigars... the boys are waiting.

Victor leaves. Elizabeth, against her best judgement, smiles.

VICTOR (V.O.)

*On many an occasion, a man believes he has met an angel- or the devil...*

CUT TO

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - DAY

VICTOR

Only to find out that is all an illusion. The game of chess we play, we play only against ourselves...

The Captain takes this in.

Victor coughs- his BLOOD STAINS a handkerchief. He fades. Victor's breath grows shallow.

Sips more laudanum- A NOISE - Victor tenses- they hear heavy footsteps.

The door opens!

CHIEF OFFICER LARSEN

Captain! You better come with me!!

EXT. SHIP DECK - DAY

*[The following dialogue is in Danish.]*

Captain Anderson scans the horizon with Binoculars.

CHIEF OFFICER LARSEN

The Men are afraid, Captain- The Watchman saw him, circling the ship. In the mist.

Captain Anderson scans the horizon-

CAPTAIN ANDERSON

I see nothing-

The MEN AROUND THEM are listening intently-

CHIEF OFFICER LARSEN

Sir, the men are afraid- they think that man- should be surrendered to the ice and be done with this-

CAPTAIN ANDERSON

He is under my protection... and the protection of the crown! No one and nothing comes near him!! If the men are so afraid: Release all the weapons and make a perimeter around the ship.

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - DAY

Captain Anderson enters his quarters. He closes the door and locks it- Doctor Udsen approaches him:

DOCTOR UDSEN  
(sotto, Danish)  
He doesn't have much longer....

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
(sotto, Danish)  
We may be running out of time ourselves-  
The men are close to mutiny.

VICTOR  
What was it?!

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
The men needed more tools- they are  
making progress- freeing the ship from  
the binding ice.

VICTOR  
And then-?

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
Then we set sail. Forward. We will stop  
ever so briefly to relinquish you to the  
authorities at Gustaffson's post- and  
sail on- to the Pole.

VICTOR  
I was led to believe you had missed your  
window.

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
I will make it up- I will see it through-  
It is my destiny.

VICTOR  
I see... you share my madness. Perhaps  
there is a finer point than it was  
visible at first, in me telling you my  
story.

EXT. COUNTRY ROADS BY A LAKE - DAY

VICTOR (V.O.)  
A few weeks later- I rode with William  
and Harlander to a lake near Vaduz,  
across the channel...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARLANDER'S LUXURIOUS CARRIAGE crosses the country. An idyllic landscape, sky mottled by clouds.

INT. HARLANDER'S CARRIAGE - SAME

WILLIAM

The tower was built as a water filtration plant- to irrigate the fields- public works. Construction was abandoned at the start of the war...

HARLANDER

Not this war- the one before- or the one before that, I cannot quite remember.

William presents a few schematics drawn on parchment.

He smiles. The carriage stops.

EXT. TOWER - DAY

Victor, William, and Harlander descend from the carriage. Victor smiles.

A TOWER is revealed:

Built on a sheer stone cliff- A majestic GOTHIC water Tower which overlooks the Lake. Built in the early 1800's.

EXT. CLIFF - DAY

The TOWER looms over the edge of the precipice.

INT. TOWER - LOBBY - DAY

They enter a magnificent, if abandoned, lobby. FOUR SOLDIERS in MEDICAL UNIFORM await.

WILLIAM

The structure is intact. There are large living quarters on the North Wing- And more than enough space for the lab in the rest of the tower-

Victor climbs the staircase, excited- tempted.

Victor looks up- the staircase goes up several floors.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR  
There's more-?

INT. TOWER - LAB - DAY

Victor peeks out of the window and looks into the lake.

HARLANDER  
The tower will be conditioned to your exact specifications. Anything you need or want shall be granted.

VICTOR  
Anything?

HARLANDER  
Anything.  
(then)  
I have secured William's services for the duration of the project.  
(MORE)

HARLANDER (CONT'D)  
His salary is both a generous wedding present and a safeguard of discretion.

VICTOR  
I will need a holding cell and an ice chamber close to the lab-

HARLANDER  
William?

William writes it down.

WILLIAM  
There are two pump reservoirs at the base of the tower- we will recondition them.

Victor points at the surrounding lab.

VICTOR  
We will recondition the steam engines, and we will need enough petrol to run them. There- Four high capacity Voltaic batteries- positive and negative polarities-

EXT. TOP OF THE TOWER - SAME

VICTOR

A lightning rod system- made in pure silver. Telescoping down to the lab...

HARLANDER

Yes- yes. My contractors can fabricate any and all equipment you may require...

VICTOR

I will need a specimen- to find my way into the lymphatic re-routing-

HARLANDER

I will provide the access.

Harlander locks eyes with him and then extends his hand-

HARLANDER (CONT'D)

I take it, then- that we have an understanding...

Victor thinks for a moment, then shakes.

HARLANDER (CONT'D)

A bargain has been struck.

CUT TO:

EXT. HANGING COURT - DAWN

A TRIPLE HANGING occurs.

THE TRAPDOOR gives, and THREE BODIES FALL- NECKS snapping!!!

The CROWD goes wild!!! The PATRONS are eagerly consuming cheap MEAT PIES and bags of CHESTNUTS. Kids on parents' shoulders. Vendors circulate amidst the filth on the floor.

By the side of the GALLows, by the swinging legs of the THREE EXECUTED MEN-

Victor examines THE NEXT THREE PRISONERS to be hanged. By his side, the EXECUTIONER (who is munching vigorously and joyously on a MINCE PIE). He has a short WOODEN CANE under his armpit-

Victor looks into their mouth, eyes, and at their back:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR  
Not this one-

THE HANGED MEN soil themselves.

Victor covers his mouth with a handkerchief and examines the next one.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
(to the prisoner)  
Close your mouth my dear fellow-  
(another Prisoner)  
You- You're lucky to be hanged- you  
would have died within the year.  
(to Hangman)  
Herr Harander promised me access to  
optimal specimens-

HANGMAN  
That he may have, your Lordship- but  
as you well know: crime doesn't pay,  
and it's a poor showing of it we  
have here today- wretches! Every one  
of them- my humble apologies for  
that.

Victor examines the last one. Checks his back.

VICTOR  
This one- a strong back. He will do-

Victor hands a few coins and a SEALED REQUISITION COMMAND to the Executioner.

HANGMAN  
Give Herr Harlander our utmost  
gratitude-  
(hits them with the cane)  
Say thank you, lads-

PRISONERS  
Thank You.

The three HANGED MEN swinging in the gallows are CUT DOWN-  
They fall hard-

VICTOR  
Be kind enough to clean him after he  
soils himself-  
(looks at the Prisoner)  
No shame in it, you will.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

It starts to RAIN. He opens an UMBRELLA.

TIME CUT:

EXT. HANGING COURT - DAY

The CROWD CHEERS! Victor pushes through the crowd of umbrellas. He spots-

Elizabeth, under a RED UMBRELLA. Victor follows.

EXT. MARKET PLAZA / CATHEDRAL - DAY

Elizabeth- buying BOOKS from a STALL.

A NEWSPAPER VENDOR declares the end of the war forthcoming.

Elizabeth enters into a church.

INT. CATHEDRAL / CONFESSORIAL - DAY

Elizabeth looks at a CONFESSORIAL. Someone is inside.

Victor sees that. She then moves away to buy some votive candles.

VICTOR (V.O.)  
*Confession? I was intrigued. What would such a delicate creature have to confess to...? As luck would have it- and opportunity presented itself, I decided to find out...*

Victor sees a PRIEST and an OLD LADY leave the confessional. He enters it and sits on the Priest's seat. He waits. A noise. Elizabeth enters the booth.

ELIZABETH  
Bless me father for I have sinned.

VICTOR  
How long has it been since your last confession, my daughter?

ELIZABETH  
Barely a week, Father. I was in a convent.

VICTOR  
A week? Have you, so hastily, already incurred in sin?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELIZABETH  
I have. Sin of intent. Not deed.

VICTOR  
A man, is it?

ELIZABETH  
Yes. My fiancee's brother.

VICTOR  
Lust?

ELIZABETH  
Hatred.

Victor is startled.

VICTOR  
Hatred?

ELIZABETH  
The man is appalling. Grotesque.

VICTOR  
Harsh words.

ELIZABETH  
Respectfully, father- you do not know this man... he- tries to control and manipulate everything and everyone around him. And like every tyrant, he delights in playing the victim. His only advantage, I would say, is that he is *far* cruder than he believes himself to be.

VICTOR  
Pray explain yourself, my child.

ELIZABETH  
For one- he is easier to spot and made sport of- one can see him, even in a busy street... on market day.

Victor turns. Elizabeth smiles. Victor comes out of the booth.

VICTOR  
How soon?

ELIZABETH  
I saw you, well before you saw me. I can say that much-  
(beat)  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)  
It is a woman's condition to remain  
alert.

VICTOR  
I would never doubt your gifts...

ELIZABETH  
Not a gift. Fear.

Victor comes close. She hands him a handful of candles to light. Victor lights them-

VICTOR  
For William...?

ELIZABETH  
Yes- as you know, he travels through the war zone at the moment- and I...

VICTOR  
You pray for his well being.

ELIZABETH  
I do. He is gentle and kind and full of life-

She crosses herself.

VICTOR  
And I daresay you two make a curious match- I am gratified that you care for him that much.

ELIZABETH  
As do you, I imagine.

VICTOR  
Quite- I have cared for William in one fashion or another, since he was just a little runt. Sometimes to my own detriment-

ELIZABETH  
And he is grateful for it, I'm sure.

VICTOR  
I'm sure. Have you had supper?

ELIZABETH  
I'm not that hungry, Baron. And it is late.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

VICTOR

Late? Perhaps in convent time, my dear Sister but- not in the city. I, for one, I'm famished.

(beat)

After all- I just came back from a hanging.

She laughs.

INT. ELEGANT BISTRO - DUSK

MUSICIANS play a vibrant tune.

Roughly SIXTEEN COUPLES DANCE. And the place is packed: Soldiers, men in kilts, women in evening dress, etc etc.

Victor and Elizabeth enter and sit.

VICTOR

May I? What books did you buy?

ELIZABETH

Wouldn't you care to venture? I'd rather you did.

VICTOR

Very well...

He playfully "weighs" the package, as a mind reader would- divining the contents.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

A Romance- drenched in Mediterranean sun and silk and the skirmishes of love...

Elizabeth laughs- pushes the wrapped books towards Victor.

ELIZABETH

Insulting, but unsurprising.

She opens the package- Three volumes of "THE INSECT WORLD" and "BYBEL DER NATUURE" by SWAMMERDAM.

VICTOR

Insects?

ELIZABETH

My interest in science leans towards the smallest things- moving with nature- perhaps the rhythms of God. All of my life I have looked for him- for something beyond the ordinary-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR  
Is that what you were seeking in the  
convent-

ELIZABETH  
In a way. Every woman within those  
walls was there not for vocation but  
circumstance- lack of a dowry- or lack  
of beauty.

(beat)  
Undramatic, yes- but devastating. Men  
fight the tides- women are corroded by  
mildew.

(beat)  
Reality has always meant little to me:  
The convent offered me silence and a  
vast library to continue my education.

VICTOR  
Was it worth it?

ELIZABETH  
Is anything? Perhaps my sin was asking  
too much from God- You see I have  
always searched for something more pure-  
marvelous- something words cannot name.

Their TEA AND TRAY OF FINGER FOODS arrive. He offers his  
hand to lead a dance-

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)  
It hardly seems appropriate-

VICTOR  
Try to think kindly of us, I beg you...  
You are safe in my arms-

ELIZABETH  
That, you see, is what I am not sure  
about-

(beat)  
You are either a brilliant, dazzling man-  
or a terrible- dangerous one...

Victor smiles an impish smile.

VICTOR  
For tonight- can I be a little bit  
of both?

The music starts.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

They dance.

And laugh.

And, perhaps, just perhaps-

Start to like each other a little too much.

The crowd applauds.

EXT. SILVERSMITH SHOP - DUSK

Harlander, William and Victor arrive at the SILVERSMITH's SHOP in Harlander's carriage.

Harlander stays behind.

HARLANDER

You two, go inside. I will wait here.

They exit the carriage.

WILLIAM

Is there anything I can do for you, Herr Harlander?

Harlander shakes his head: "No"

HARLANDER

The trip, William- I feel slightly indisposed.

William and Victor move away. Harlander seems out of breath. Ill. He takes a SMALL VIAL FULL OF MERCURY from the handle of his cane.

Drinks from it.

INT. SILVERSMITH SHOP - DUSK

A LIGHTNING ROD and its PARTS are shown to Victor by a SILVERSMITH.

SILVERSMITH

The main rod- its base has a fast bolting system.

Clicks it OPEN- spikes extrude out. Victor weighs it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR  
Did you use an alloy?

SILVERSMITH  
Copper and Zinc- less than ten percent  
at the core...

Victor produces his sketches for the surgery and mechanisms.

VICTOR  
No- Pure silver is the perfect  
conductor. Prevents sepsis- and must  
not be polluted by any other metal.  
(beat)  
This *garbage* will not do. Start over.

SILVERSMITH  
Respectfully Baron, we-

Victor slams his hand on the counter.

VICTOR  
Respectfully-? You would not bring this  
forth if you respected me. *Start over.*

EXT. SILVERSMITH SHOP - DUSK

VICTOR  
You must stay behind, William...

He climbs into the carriage and sits by Harlander.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
Only for a few more days. I trust you  
above anyone else... Herr Harlander?

HARLANDER  
Will you- William? Stay? For me? We will  
make sure to keep Elizabeth entertained.

William thinks about it and then nods.

A PIANOFORTE SONG pre-laps:

EXT. PARK AND LAKE - DAY

Victor and Elizabeth walk side by side. BUTTERFLIES surround  
them. They reach a large ROCK MONOLITH. A BUTTERFLY lands on  
Victor's hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELIZABETH  
I think she likes you...

INT. SILVERSMITH SHOP - DAY

William supervises the SILVERSMITHS de-molding the SILVER LIGHTNING ROD pieces that VICTOR has designed.

INT. TOWER - LAB - DAY

William supervises the raising of a LARGE COPPER BATTERY. In the B.G. a new WINDOW is raised.

EXT. TOWER - DAY

William eats a modest sandwich resting on one of the tower's ornate columns.

INT. HARLANDER'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

SERVANTS IN UNIFORM bring elaborate, extravagant sweets and fruit preparations.

Elizabeth plays the pianoforte- *The Spacious Firmament on High.*

Victor watches her neckline and shoulders with enraptured attention. Applause!

Harlander watches Victor.

INT. HARLANDER'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Victor washes his hands- A KNOCK on the door.

He opens it. It is Harlander. Music can be heard in the distance.

VICTOR  
Herr Harlander. The party is delightful-  
I would like to thank you-

HARLANDER  
I hope we are not distracting you  
from your research, to tend to me or  
Elizabeth. She is young and the world  
can be a disorienting place to her.

(beat)  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARLANDER (CONT'D)

But not to me- or you- we are, after all, men with a purpose- She can count on us to guard her....

VICTOR

I will give you your privacy...

HARLANDER

No need for subterfuge between us, is there?

Harlander hands him his cane and starts urinating.

HARLANDER (CONT'D)

French porcelain. Chimes to a man's stream.

A territorial move. Shocking, brash- very deliberate.

VICTOR

I am close to a solution- a point of access to the lymphatic system...

HARLANDER

Ah, yes- that- it has been so long... The War is waning- in fact it may come to an end soon, can you believe it? And my funding will end with it.

VICTOR

You said your funds were unlimited.

Harlander turns.

HARLANDER

They are. My patience is not.

(beat)

I have it on good authority that within a week a battle is to take place not far from our site-

Harlander produces a ROYAL SEALED SAFE CONDUIT.

HARLANDER (CONT'D)

Army will escort and assist us. The tide of War will deliver its bounty to our shore...

VICTOR

A battlefield? The bodies will be mangled...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HARLANDER

*Available. Surely you don't expect an infinite line of volunteers for your butcher board?*

(beat)

*A week: find the access point by then. After that, history will pass us by.*

He takes the cane and leaves.

HARLANDER (CONT'D)

*Now flush that for me, will you, Baron?*

Victor sees drops of blood in the porcelain. Flushes.

CUT TO:

INT. VICTOR'S APARTMENT - BLUE DUSK

RAIN AND THUNDER:

VICTOR (V.O.)

*A handful of days- a single specimen- to solve a riddle that had eluded better minds than mine for centuries. My chances were slim- but my arrogance was immense...*

Wearing RED GLASSES, Victor cuts the muscle system surrounding the spinal cord of a dissected CORPSE in a supine position.

He is covered in blood.

INT. VICTOR'S APARTMENT - DAY

Victor lays in a steaming BATHTUB, washes off the blood. Covers his face with a wet linen rag.

An idea.

He stands up, naked, and looks at himself in a FULL BODY MIRROR (the same that was in his Father's study).

Looks at his own back- thinking.

Still naked, he goes to the FLAYED BODY. Observes the SPINAL CORD-

He hastily dresses and goes to a wooden box.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It contains TWO LONG SILVER ACUPUNCTURE NEEDLES-

He looks at the FIFTH EVELYN TABLE, displayed next to the body. He PUSHES his drawings and papers (including those of a RIBCAGE AND SKULL made of silver) and finds a MINIATURE STEAM ENGINE- he connects it to two batteries-

-and then inserts the needles DEEP INTO THE SPINE.

The HANDS ON THE BODY twitch and move.

He smiles...

VICTOR (V.O.)

*I had found it. And if I could design a delivery system close enough to the heart- I would be in control... but control is an illusion. As I would soon find out.*

A KNOCK on the door. Victor takes the needles out- puts on a robe and goes to it.

VICTOR

A moment, please-

Elizabeth. She has the BUTTERFLY ALIVE IN A JAR.

ELIZABETH

I brought you a present. I believe she missed you...

(beat)

Will you invite me in? I am drenched!

VICTOR

You should not come in.

ELIZABETH

Why not?

VICTOR

I'm working.

A beat, and then:

TIME CUT:

She puts down her umbrella.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELIZABETH

I cannot stay long. William is back  
and we are dining out...

Victor shows her his Operating Stage. Hands her a TOWEL.

VICTOR

Does it shock you?

Victor puts the killing jar away.

ELIZABETH

No. It moves me- it is somehow...  
*beautiful, is it not?* Reminds me of  
martyrdom paintings. There's a  
serenity to it- all pain is gone. You  
can see God's design in the symmetry  
and the shapes.

She pulls her hair up- and in the rain light, she looks  
impossibly beautiful.

VICTOR

Elizabeth... I must confess something to  
you-

ELIZABETH

Confession comes from a hidden truth.  
Is there something you are hiding,  
Baron? If there is, please keep it  
so... to say what one shan't is a  
weakness of character.

VICTOR

The only weakness in my character, my  
dear Elizabeth, is you...

(beat)

I can feel you near, every time. And  
inevitably, you pull away-

(beat)

But there is a bond- you feel it? An  
almost physical one- and neither time  
nor distance seem to sever it...

He comes dangerously close- she moves away.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

Then- are my attentions unwelcome?  
Unwanted? Say so and I will withdraw  
them. Every gaze I will avert, every  
heartbeat I will suffocate... but I  
sincerely believed it to be something  
else...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ELIZABETH

Believing something does not make it true.

VICTOR

Why are you here, then-?

ELIZABETH

Confusion. There was peace- and clarity in the silence of the convent. With you, the noise- the world, came rushing back.

She wrestles herself away. Takes the Butterfly in the jar.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

A beautiful creature- is she not? Remote- entirely bewitching- but so odd: three hearts, multiple eyes, white blood and a fascinating lack of choice...

VICTOR

I do not follow...

ELIZABETH

Well- insects eat, reproduce, even sacrifice themselves for the colony- But they do so not out of selflessness but compelled by a preordained mandate- without the use of their will.

(beat)

Thus, there is no evil or virtue in their actions. Choice is the seat of the soul. The one gift God granted us.

(beat)

I have chosen. Goodnight.

She exits the apartment.

EXT. FROZEN LANDSCAPE - BLUE DUSK

Larson examines the Men, armed and surrounding the ship as BONFIRES are lit.

IN THE DISTANCE, a FIGURE watches-

THE CREATURE. Its FACE now almost entirely restored.

CUT TO:

INT. TOWER - LAB - DUSK

The lab is now finished- Victor walks around, carrying his PORTABLE LAB. It is snowing inside, through the OPENING above.

VICTOR  
Tell them to handle it carefully-  
the acid is highly corrosive!!

Wearing gloves and goggles, FOUR WORKERS fill the FUEL TANKS OF THE STEAM ENGINES.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
Top them up- they will run all night-

William presents a display of the Silversmith's Creations-

WILLIAM  
Pure silver- the boxes have to stay sealed to avoid oxidation.

William hands him his sketches- Victor smiles.

VICTOR  
Surgery table?

WILLIAM  
Over here-

Harlander assembles an ELABORATE TRIPOD UNIT to photograph an elaborate OPERATING TABLE.

Harlander keeps an eye on William.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)  
As per your designs- the energy points in the surgery table correspond to the lymphatic system, exactly- hammered silver inlay and copper points on top and bottom.  
(then)  
The ice chamber and holding cell are ready, and I moved all your belongings to the living quarters...  
(beat)  
May I show you...

They leave. Harlander notices this-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARLANDER  
Do not wander far- our harvest  
awaits...

INT. TOWER - LAB / VICTOR'S QUARTERS - SAME

Workers set up boxes and crates- Victor's living quarters are being set up.

WILLIAM  
Victor- I know you can do this- I have never doubted it. But- *should* you be doing it? Stop now, please, before it's too late.

HARLANDER  
You may go back to Edinburgh and take everyone with you. What will happen here, kind eyes should not bear witness to... "When shall we three meet again... In thunder, lightning, or in rain? When the hurly-burly's done, When the battle's lost... and won..."

EXT. FROZEN BATTLEFIELD - DAY

A FROZEN BATTLEFIELD: Bodies- horses covered in ice in half gallop. Piles of corpses, discarded cannons, weapons, limbs. The MUD IS VIVID RED with blood. WINDMILLS pepper the HORIZON- blades rocking softly in the chilled wind.

RAVENS FEED on the HORSE CARCASSES and DECOMPOSING BODIES. THREE SCAVENGERS take boots and jackets.

VICTOR  
No- no- we cannot take any men from the top of the pile. Or the bottom.

He goes from BODY to BODY and marks them with a piece of CHALK- arms, legs. The MEN in MEDICAL MILITARY garb then carry the bodies to an "Ice Cart".

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
Ice or rot may have destroyed the tissue. Look only in the middle...

He examines a body- marks its leg with chalk. HARLANDER watches- covering his nose with a handkerchief.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARLANDER

It gives me solace to see that youth  
and strength may yet be salvaged for  
our purpose-

VICTOR

The bodies are mangled. I am favoring  
tall specimens- Long shattered limbs.  
Scale will make the work easier-

HARLANDER

Abundance can be disorienting unless  
one hones one's aim. Perfection. And  
why not, my dear Baron?

INT. TOWER - ICE CHAMBER - DUSK

The Two Men in Medical Military garb lay the BODIES on  
blocks of ice, in a VAST ICE CHAMBER. Victor observes.

INT. TOWER - LAB - NIGHT

Victor lays out all his NOTES AND SKETCHES and starts to  
assemble a man according to them...

He sutures.

Saws.

Cuts bone.

Then, he SCRIBBLES and DRAWS- correcting, perfecting...

Victor matches, assembles and transplants what is needed.

Using his CAMERA and TRIPOD, Harlander produces  
DAGUERROTYPEs of the whole process.

DEVELOPS them and prints them on GLASS PLATES.

Victor opens his FATHER's surgical TOOL BOX. Sees the IVORY  
VENUS. Smiles.

Victor harvests tendons from a PIG'S HEAD.

A HUMAN FACE is reconstructed from parts. EYE SOCKETS  
exposed.

AN EXPOSED THROAT- VOCAL CHORDS ARE RECONNECTED AND THEN-  
COVERED BY A FLAP OF SKIN.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A HAND is repurposed- rewired.

PILES of BODY PARTS and clothing-

- boots, jackets, pants-

- arms- legs accumulate.

Now UNDER THE LIGHT OF HUNDREDS OF CANDLES: A SCALP is put together like a Jigsaw puzzle.

Harlander records it all in photographs.

He then arranges the Daguerrotypes and glass plates around. He grows dizzy...

HARLANDER

I need a moment- If I may-

Victor sits by the window- ANATOMICAL VENUS in hand. He sees PILES OF ROTTING LIMBS AND HANDS.

INT. TOWER - HOLDING CELL / CHUTE - DAY

Victor hauls sacks full of bloody and rotting remains.

He looks weak and pale- sweaty and spent, as he throws them out down a tiled chute-

He almost vomits- carries on...

EXT. TOWER AND CLIFF - DAY

The remains fall out of a chute and down into the lake below.

INT. TOWER - LAB - DAY

UNDER A SHAFT OF LIGHT- Victor turns to contemplate the FULLY ASSEMBLED CREATURE laying on the folded "Y" table. In its present position it looks almost like a WOODEN slab.

Victor opens the wooden boxes containing the SILVER SPIKES and SILVER RIBCAGE.

He places them on the body-

Hands stained with blood- Victor takes a moment-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Thunder. In the distance: a STORM is brewing. THE ROOM DARKENS... Like an eclipse in Golgotha.

VICTOR  
It is finished...

EXT. TOWER - WINDOW LOOKING IN - SAME

Victor smiles.

He STARTS the STEAM ENGINES- the BATTERIES pulsate gently.

He heads for his living quarters.

VICTOR  
Harlander...?!

INT. TOWER - VICTOR'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Victor enters.

VICTOR  
Herr Harlander! A storm is coming!

He opens the door and finds Harlander leaning against a furnace, half-dressed, doubled over in pain.

He is revealed to be BALD-

His "hair" on a wooden wig mount. Lacerations are visible all over his cranium, crossed by wispy, gray hair.

He is out of breath and in pain.

The men look at each other. Harlander points at his cane.

HARLANDER  
My cane- in the handle- quick-

Victor hands him his mercury. Harlander sips it greedily.

HARLANDER (CONT'D)  
Thank You.

VICTOR  
Mercury...

HARLANDER  
(nods)  
I am dying...  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARLANDER (CONT'D)  
not precisely at this moment, but- I have  
been handed a most *forceful* invitation.

VICTOR  
Is it-?

HARLANDER  
Yes, yes- one night with Venus- a  
lifetime with Mercury, isn't that the  
phrase? Venus, Vestal, Venereal-  
Increasingly percussive consonants and  
vowels...

(beat)  
The words we choose to punish ourselves:  
So- *sharp*. So- *sibilant*-

VICTOR  
What stage? Secondary?

Harlander nods. Turns his hand: "A little further than that"

HARLANDER  
Circa principia et fines- we both know  
the precise schedule, don't we? Quite  
predictable. That is what makes it so  
horrid. Symptoms go away and then-  
quickly- it will eat away my bones-  
orbital, cheekbone, teeth- skull- gone.  
Exposing my brain, tumors, madness,  
excruciating pain... and one fine  
morning I will start screaming and I  
will never stop.

(beat)  
I have curated a life. An exquisite life.  
I cannot face such a *vulgar* demise...

(beat)  
Which- brings me to my one condition.  
Our deal.

And, in an instant, Victor understands even before a word is  
uttered-

VICTOR  
No-

Harlander puts the wig back.

HARLANDER  
As agreed: In exchange for my generous  
intervention on your behalf-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

VICTOR  
(overlapping)  
No-

HARLANDER  
As we give life to our new Adam. I want-

VICTOR  
(overlapping)  
No.

Touches his head- pats it-

HARLANDER  
To be placed in that new, perfect body.

Victor leaves-

VICTOR  
No.  
(beat)  
Not now. No-

HARLANDER  
Yes. Yes, Yes! Precisely now.  
Unsustainably now.

VICTOR  
There are too many risks.

HARLANDER  
Risks? For whom? Me?

VICTOR  
We will talk about this, after...  
but not now...

HARLANDER  
After? There is no after...

Harlander follows.

INT. TOWER - LAB - SAME

Victor climbs away, up a staircase.

EXT. TOP OF THE TOWER - NIGHT

It's RAINING- Victor fiddles with PART "A" of the LIGHTNING ROD SYSTEM.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Distant thunder... Victor starts to feel the wind picking up. LIGHTNING getting closer!

For a moment, he takes it all in: something looming, approaching... Destiny.

INT. TOP OF THE TOWER - NIGHT

Soaking wet- Victor climbs back into the dome. Harlander is there- dressed and waiting.

VICTOR

Listen to me-

HARLANDER

I did. That was my mistake.

VICTOR

I need time- there will be more-

HARLANDER

I- *I-have-no-more-time!!*

(beat)

And neither do you! All you need to say is one simple word. "Yes". No more, and you may rest assured, no less. You are now at liberty to speak...

VICTOR

The disease has spread all inside you. It is systemic and you know it- every organ in you is polluted- your brain, your blood- are polluted.

HARLANDER

But my money is not. Is that it?

(beat)

I gave you everything you wanted. Tell me: what else do you need?

(beat)

HARLANDER (CONT'D)

I will give you *anything* you ask for.

Name it. It's yours.

(beat)

*Even Elizabeth. Please-*

(beat)

*Please always helps...*

Victor eyes the second lightning rod base.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR  
You would ruin it all. I would fail.  
I do not fail.

Harlander pushes the Lightning Rod Box, with his foot.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
What are you doing?

HARLANDER  
You want your toys- you take them-  
without consequence... you want your  
brother's fiancee, you send him away-  
try to seduce her-

He pushes the box further- His leg inadvertently enters the leather strap.

VICTOR  
Stop!

HARLANDER  
You just do as you please, you are a  
spoiled brat and it is time you  
learned a lesson.

Victor approaches Harlander.

HARLANDER (CONT'D)  
It should come as no surprise to you  
that I have no gift for creation.  
(beat)  
But I exceed at destruction- *I will be*  
*the eagle that feasts on your liver...*

He pushes the box further- closer to the edge.

HARLANDER (CONT'D)  
Without this- nothing happens, yes?  
Well- we both lose something tonight-  
*Little Baron!*

Harlander pushes the box- his leg tangled on the case's  
LEATHER STRAP!

He goes down the opening and skids on the wet stone!!

HARLANDER (CONT'D)  
No...

Victor watches, tries to reach for him-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HARLANDER (CONT'D)  
(in German, subtitled)  
Nicht so... Mein Gott- Was für eine  
dumme Art zu sterben...

- but fails.

Weighed down by the heavy LIGHTNING ROD CASE, Harlander  
slides down-

-and falls through the circular opening-

-plummets down-

down toward the lab main chute-

INT. TOWER - LAB CHUTE - NIGHT

Several stories down-

And finally-

INT. TOWER - LAB - NIGHT

Smashes against the tile!!!

Dead.

The LIGHTNING ROD BOX CRACKS!

CUT TO:

INT. TOWER - LAB / ICE CHAMBER - NIGHT

Victor drags the broken body and puts him in the ice  
chamber. He breathes plumes of icy despair. Closes the  
chamber.

EXT. TOWER AND CLIFF - NIGHT

A THUNDERSTORM. RAIN pours inside the lab!!!

WIND, LIGHTNING...

INT. TOP OF THE TOWER - SAME

Victor screws the LIGHTNING ROD- examines it. It's bent!!! No time: He cranks the railing back to the center of the opening! The LIGHTNING is growing dangerously close!

EXT. TOWER AND CLIFF - NIGHT

The First Lightning bolt channels into the SILVER LIGHTNING ROD- the electricity explodes at the top of the TOWER-

INT. TOWER - STONE STAIRCASE - SAME

It arcs dangerously above Victor as he takes the staircase down!!!

INT. TOWER - LAB - NIGHT

He turns on a CRANK and the PLANK rises up and EXTENDS in a "Y" cross shape.

EXT. TOWER AND CLIFF - NIGHT

LIGHTNING fills the frame and encircles the woods, the lake- illuminates the waters and the forest!!!

INT. TOWER - LAB - NIGHT

Victor releases the LIGHTNING ROD, which-

INT. TOWER - SHAFT - NIGHT

Extends down the shaft!!!

EXT. TOWER AND CLIFF - NIGHT

The First Lightning bolt channels into the SILVER LIGHTNING ROD-

INT. TOWER - SHAFT - NIGHT

Travels down the shaft and-

INT. TOWER - LAB - NIGHT

Bounces off the broken LIGHTNING ROD and arcs EVERYWHERE around Victor!!! A discharge happens!

INT. TOWER - LAB - SAME

ARCS OF ELECTRICITY contort the assembled body!!!

A BATTERY EXPLODES!!!

Victor falls to the ground- ELECTRICITY illuminates a puddle of water, blinding Victor!!!

THE SILVER CAPS and SPIKES on the "Y" cross, GLOW RED HOT!

The "Y" table is charred- gunpowder-marked. THE BODY seems translucent for a moment, revealing Skeleton and organs!!!

Silver glowing, Victor cranks the BODY down to the horizontal position. Twin amber stains pour from the eyes beneath the mask.

He removes the silver ribcage and mask.

They fall to the floor- discarded-

Pulls the 4-5-6 feet of catheter out of the wound in the torso.

Looks for signs of life.

But life does not occur.

The bandages on the mouth stain with blood.

FAILURE.

Victor beats the chest of the body- upturns the tables with surgical equipment- and screams in rage!

INT. TOWER - VICTOR'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Victor collapses. Exhausted.

A BEAUTIFUL BRONZE AND MARBLE MANTLE CLOCK, ticking quietly amidst the lab equipment. Books around it.

Victor closes his eyes and sees the disintegration of his mother's face- rapidly, as if in time-lapse!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THEN THE BURNING SCARLET ANGEL!!! TURNING TO HIM!!

DARK ANGEL  
I live!!!

INT. TOWER - VICTOR'S QUARTERS - DAWN

Victor wakes in the dusty canopy bed- startled.

A long and crooked shadow extends over the sleeping man.

Victor stirs; a cold dew covers his forehead.

He turns to face-

-by the dim and yellow light of dawn, as it forces its way through the curtain partings-

A WRETCHED FIGURE at the foot of his bed.

Staring back at him- holding up the bed curtain.

It is his creation: Baleful, emaciated, every muscle and tendon tense.

His eyes, if eyes they may be called, are fixed on Victor. Breath rises and falls gently on its stretched and wax-like thorax. The skin is taut and tense- insufficient, perhaps, to cover all the structure- the muscle, sinew and bone.

The murky eyes follow every little movement Victor makes.

Victor slowly gets up and THE CREATURE follows him.

Unsure steps, but entirely aware of his every move.

Victor extends his hands, as a father would to a baby.

The Creature responds in kind.

VICTOR  
Hand... your hand... your fingers-  
show me- show me-

He opens and closes his hand- The Creature does the same.

Their hands touch.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
I am Victor...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He removes his leather glove and with his bare hand touches The Creature's shoulder.

The Creature feels the contact and welcomes it with a warm smile. He places his right hand over Victor's-

-And then gently lands his left on Victor's shoulder.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
Victor...

CREATURE  
Vic-tor...

VICTOR  
Yes, yes, Victor...

CREATURE  
Victor.

VICTOR  
Oh, God- Yes, yes, yes...

He laughs.

The Creature half smiles.

They embrace.

Victor opens the shutters.

The Creature reacts in shock!

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
No! No! It's sunlight! Warmth! Face it!  
Feel it! The sun is life!

He turns to face the sun and closes his eyes, taking it in.

The Creature does the same, imitating Victor.

He tries to capture the light- enraptured by his own shadows in the early sunrise.

Victor sees this and is delighted!

Like a father seeing his child.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
Sun! Light! Sun!  
(beat)  
Say it: Sun!!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Victor laughs bathed in the blessed light of the sun.

CUT TO:

INT. TOWER - HOLDING CELL / CHUTE - DAY

They descend the steps into the holding cell.

Victor guides The Creature step by step, and then to a tiled plinth...

He uses a WOODEN HORN to hear his breathing, his heart.

The Creature is curious, tries to hold it.

Victor has to pantomime for The Creature to stay still.

He examines The Creature's eyes. Mouth. And is, in turn, examined by The Creature. They Laugh. The Creature's legs are bound with an IRON BAR and MANACLES.

The Creature tries to follow, but is stopped by the chain.

CREATURE

Vic-tor...

Victor signals him to "stay".

The Creature mimics back.

Victor leaves.

The Creature checks behind a column- Victor is gone...

CREATURE (CONT'D)  
(a whisper)

Vic-tor...

He explores the cell-

Looks at a skull and some bones. Lifts one- ponders it..

He sees a ray of light.

Gets under it. Extends his arms. Victor smiles.

VICTOR (V.O.)

*Everything was new to him: the cold, the warmth, light, darkness- and I was there to mold him...*

INT. TOWER - LOBBY STAIRS - DAY

Victor ascends the stairs.

VICTOR (V.O.)

*I had never considered what would come after creation. And, having reached the edge of the earth, there was no horizon left. The achievement felt unnatural and void of meaning... and that disturbed me so...*

INT. HARLANDER'S QUARTERS - DAY

Sitting on the RUG- Elizabeth plays with a SHINY, LIVE BEETLES and writes and sketches in a small book of her own. Several BOOKS on entomology lie around open.

The Butler brings the MAIL on a SILVER TRAY. William examines it.

ELIZABETH

Nothing from my uncle?

WILLIAM

Correspondence from Geneva. The family Estate... But- do not concern yourself, my dear. We will visit them soon. Quite soon, I promise.

William, shakes his head. He then sees an elegant OFFICIAL LOOKING ENVELOPE with FOUR WAX SEALS. He smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. TOWER - LAB -DAY

Victor fills a copper bathtub with BUCKETS OF BOILING WATER.

Using a standing WASHBASIN, Victor shaves The Creature's STUBBLED HEAD- leaving a clean strip.

VICTOR (V.O.)

*My chores multiplied every day: fingernails and hair grew so rapidly that- in order to monitor his scars healing- I trimmed them again and again- often to the point of exhaustion-*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Victor leaves the flat razor and goes for more hot water.

VICTOR  
Don't touch that- don't-

The Creature goes for the blade again.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
No. Leave it be- you should not touch  
it- NO- You are not a child- you-

Victor stops- or is he? A difficult dilemma. The Creature looks at himself in the mirror. Puzzled. Exactly like a child. Vivacious but- for Victor- not intelligent enough.

Victor pulls the blade even further. He gets the water pail and, when he turns around-

The Creature has picked up the BLADE and has cuts on his palms. Blood rushes out.

CREATURE  
Vic-tor....

VICTOR  
What have you done?! I told you to leave it be. I told you... give me that! Give me that!!!

Victor takes The Creature's hands and wraps them with a towel..

He takes his MEDICAL BAG. Gets GAUZE and A NEEDLE KIT.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
You hurt yourself- I- I did not do this... you did.  
(beat)  
You need to understand- these are simple, basic principles... You have to understand... You have to! If I am to help you- you have to help me and-

The Creature touches Victor with a bloody hand. Victor slaps it away, repulsed.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
No! Don't touch me!! Don't-!! You-

The Creature is surprised at the violent act. His eyes brim with tears and confusion. Victor cleans the wound-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
I want nothing but your own good.  
Don't you understand- I am doing  
this for your own g-

He pauses-

The wound is gone! ONLY THICK SCARS remain...

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
You are healed- you are healed-  
these are scars... how...?

He then sees- The hair strip he shaved, is gone. Only full  
stubble is visible...

EXT. ROAD TO THE TOWER - DAY

RAIN. Harlander's carriage moves through the landscape.

INT. HARLANDER'S CARRIAGE - DAY

William and Elizabeth ride together.

WILLIAM  
We will be there soon enough...

She nods, gently.

INT. TOWER - HOLDING CELL / CHUTE - DAY

Victor is chaining The Creature. He uses a *SLIDING IRON BAR*  
to join the chains - to fasten them to the *TILED BASE*.

VICTOR  
I believe you have thoughts- you must-  
somewhere in there... They may be  
jumbled, confused, but you have  
thoughts... something you want to say...  
(beat)  
Am I presuming too much?

Beat and then, heartbreakingly:

CREATURE  
Vic-tor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR  
 Yes! Yes! That is my name- this much  
 we have established, but can you say  
 anything else? Anything at all? Hand!!  
 Sun!! Rain!! Cold!! Anything?!  
 (beat)  
 Say one more word!! One!  
 (beat)  
 Surely you understand a word or two more!  
 (raises a hand again)  
 Hand. Say it. Can you understand that?  
 (beat)  
 I am exhausted. I have not slept- I feel  
 hot and cold and I shudder- not a wink-  
 not a winkle- dink- of sleep to tend to  
 you... and I get nothing... Nothing back!

The Creature recoils.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
 Oh- Oh- oh- Are you afraid of me? Me?  
 Why? How am I to be feared?! I am not  
 going to hurt you- how could I? I am your  
 sole benefactor! Your maker! I made- you-

He pokes The Creature on the forehead-

The Creature shrinks in fear. He fails to articulate any word except:

CREATURE  
 Vic-tor...

The loud sound of the BRASS KNOCKERS at the tower door.  
 Victor slides the iron bar, locks it, and turns away.

FADE OUT/IN:

EXT. TOWER ENTRANCE / INT. TOWER - LOBBY - DAY

Victor opens the door at the base of the tower- William and Elizabeth enter the lobby-

VICTOR  
 Oh- oh- Come, come- I have much to  
 tell you- much to show you, I-

ELIZABETH  
 Is my uncle here...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR  
No. I'm alone. He is not here. He will  
be back in a few days.

WILLIAM  
You look exhausted, Victor- you look  
sick-

VICTOR  
I have never felt better. I have never  
had a clearer mind-

He touches his forehead.

WILLIAM  
God- you're running a fever. Come-  
come with me...

They climb the steps.

Elizabeth hears a distant groan. Lets them go.

INT. TOWER - HOLDING CELL / CHUTE - DAY

Elizabeth enters the holding cell. She is hit by the rotting  
smell emanating from the Body Chute.

She covers her nose- hears a faint noise.

She turns- an errant ray of sunlight reveals THE CREATURE-

They make eye contact.

His scars, his pale nakedness.

Elizabeth's eyes fill with tears.

He smiles- trying to understand this new person.

He goes to her, but before he can reach her. The chains stop  
him.

She goes to him. Sees his wounds.

CREATURE  
Victor...

She sees the wound on his side- Christ-like.

CUT TO:

INT. TOWER - VICTOR'S QUARTERS - SAME

William gives Victor a sip of Whisky from a travel flask.

WILLIAM

Victor... I have spoken to the Royal Medical Society. I showed them your papers- Harlander's letters of support.

He produces the elaborate SEALED ENVELOPE.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

They are interested in seeing you.  
They-

VICTOR

I am not ready, William- not yet.

William opens the SHUTTERS. Lets the sun in.

Elizabeth enters. Pale- shocked.

ELIZABETH

The man- that man downstairs- what happened to him?

VICTOR

You saw him?

ELIZABETH

I saw him- William- you should too-  
(beat)

Is he a patient? A victim? His wounds,  
Victor- who wounded him like that? You?

VICTOR

No- it is the world that hurt him,  
Elizabeth.

(beat)

I? I gave him life.

CUT TO:

INT. TOWER - HOLDING CELL - NIGHT

William, overwhelmed- examines The Creature. Elizabeth stands nearby.

Victor pulls on the neck chain, guiding him up. William is in awe and terrified. Elizabeth averts The Creature's eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR  
Move to the side... it's still getting  
used to light...

WILLIAM  
You did it...

VICTOR  
I did- all systems have healed- all  
functional-

He turns The Creature like a circus animal.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
And he is strong, William- so strong- I  
have not measured it, but it is quite  
exceptional. And the healing- it is  
erratic, but sometimes- miraculous-

WILLIAM  
Does Harlander know?

Victor averts his eyes-

VICTOR  
He left- before it was com-

WILLIAM  
(cutting in)  
Oh- we must prepare for that- have  
everything ready. For him.

William leaves. Elizabeth locks eyes with Victor.

ELIZABETH  
Why do you keep him chained in this  
foul place? It's inhuman...

VICTOR  
Makes it easy to maintain it- clean  
after it- And it doesn't know any  
better...

ELIZABETH  
But you do. We all do.

INT. TOWER - VICTOR'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

RAINING- drops streak the windows. William reads through  
Victor's papers and notes. He goes through the glass plates,  
the DAGUERROTYPEs. He is exhausted.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Victor is asleep as William caresses his forehead with deep fraternal love, covers him with a blanket.

WILLIAM

I cannot fathom exactly how you did what you did- but its dimension does not escape me.

(sotto)

And yet- there is something disquieting about that creature down there- something distorted, askew- like a figure peeking around a fun house mirror- something pale and horrible- but animated... by what?

Then he slumps on a chair and covers himself with his coat.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

The soul. Victor- of all the parts that make that man- which do you think holds the soul?

Nearby, on the CANOPY BED, lies Elizabeth.

Her reddish/coppery hair loose- cascading over the white linen sheets and pillows.

She gets up. Goes by. Victor awakes...

INT. TOWER - HOLDING CELL / CHUTE - NIGHT

Rain. The Creature lies in his cell.

THUNDER and LIGHTNING scare him-

WATER pours from above and accumulates in a groove that bisects the floor plan and pours out of the chute.

He drinks from it, cupping it in his hand.

Elizabeth enters the cell.

ELIZABETH

Can you say my name-? Elizabeth...

She touches her own chest-

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

Elizabeth... say it...

She hums a song- a sweet song TRAVERTINA.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Creature is puzzled. Bewitched by the song.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)  
This is music- music...

She takes his hand and puts it against her throat. He feels the vibration.

The Creature hands her a dry leaf- she smiles.

INT. TOWER - LOBBY - NIGHT

VICTOR  
Do not ever go close to it!!

ELIZABETH  
It? It?

VICTOR  
Yes- It... I believe- there is life in it- but not the spark of intelligence as I had hoped...

ELIZABETH  
Perhaps not as you understand it...

VICTOR  
Something went wrong. A connection- a suture- a blockage...

ELIZABETH  
You, the great Victor Frankenstein, made a mistake...?

VICTOR  
The creature knows but one word- and one word only... "Victor" and he parrots it without any rhyme or reason... Over and over...

Long beat.

ELIZABETH  
Perhaps that is the only word he needs.  
(beat)  
Perhaps- for the time being- that word means *everything* to him...  
(beat)  
What if you assembled the puzzle- but, God solved it for you...  
(beat)  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)  
What if- in being anew- the spirit that  
animates Him is simpler- purer-

VICTOR  
Purer?!

ELIZABETH  
Purer than that of the common man?  
What if, unrestrained by sin, our  
creator's breath came into its  
wounded flesh directly-

VICTOR  
Good God, Elizabeth- if I could force  
myself to believe it, it would be my  
inclination to see, *attraction-*  
*affection-* in you- for that thing.

ELIZABETH  
Understanding. In those eyes I saw  
pain- and what is pain if not evidence  
of intelligence?

VICTOR  
What about *my* pain? You care for that  
monstrous thing- but not for me?

ELIZABETH  
For God, nothing is monstrous.

VICTOR  
What about what you have denied me?  
What my heart wants...

ELIZABETH  
Your heart? Your heart?!

She laughs. This stings Victor.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)  
Of all the human anatomy- that is  
the organ furthest from your  
understanding.

She leaves him standing there. And she walks away. In his  
eyes- a rage. A jealous rage.

INT. TOWER - HOLDING CELL - NIGHT

The Creature is crouching- a NOISE-

Victor approaches-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR  
Purer than the common man, are you?  
And I- somehow- am the villain...

He picks up one of the many IRON BARS on the floor.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
God is in you... is it? Well then  
talk! Say another word- any word-

He presses his finger against the Creature's forehead! The creature recoils.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
Don't recoil- This is madness!! You  
have nothing to fear!! Not from me!!  
Don't you understand anything at all?!

(beat)

Don't hide from me. Don't hide from me!

He beats him- once- twice- three times-

Finally The Creature holds Victor's hand.

Victor tries to pull away his hand- but The Creature holds it in place- effortlessly- Tears streaming from his eyes.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
Let go. Let go.

And- for a moment- the strength of The Creature is clear:  
superior and unyielding. Victor releases the bar-

The Creature relinquishes his grip.

Then BENDS THE IRON BAR as if it was rubber, and throws it away.

Victor is scared.

EXT. FRONT OF THE TOWER - DAY

VICTOR  
We must burn my notes. Erase all trace  
of that thing ever living.

WILLIAM  
Why- why do you say this?

Victor thinks- a long beat and then-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR  
I failed. I did. The Creature. It is very dangerous.

WILLIAM  
Victor- we must wait for Harlander to return- make the decision together.

VICTOR  
William- there is something you must know. Something I will show you... But after I do- you have to promise me- you will take Elizabeth away, to safety and bring the authorities.

(beat)  
The outcome of it all, depends on this...

WILLIAM  
I promise, then...

VICTOR  
Come with me, then-

INT. TOWER - ICE CHAMBER - DAY

Victor opens the ICE CHAMBER and shows William- HARLANDER'S BROKEN BODY... frost covering it.

VICTOR  
The creature is unstable. Unpredictable. In a fit of rage, it killed Harlander... You understand, of course, why I was hesitant to share this at first, and certainly not to Elizabeth...

WILLIAM  
What are we going to do now?

Victor closes the chamber.

VICTOR  
Take Elizabeth to Vienna. Don't discuss this with her. At all. Something urgent came up, you must leave. Keep her in the dark. For her own safety.  
(beat)  
Then come back with help... I will be waiting. It will all be fine.

WILLIAM  
Will you be safe?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR  
I will. But you must do as I say.

WILLIAM  
(nods)  
The Creature- what is its life span,  
you think?

Victor looks at him- resolved.

VICTOR  
Brief. Very brief, I'm sure.

EXT. TOWER - DAY

William helps Elizabeth up into the carriage.

WILLIAM  
You must do as I say- we will be back  
in no time. But for now, this is for  
the best.

Elizabeth takes a long last look back.

INT. HARLANDER'S CARRIAGE - DAY

WILLIAM  
I assure you everything will end  
well...  
(beat)  
Do you trust me?

She hesitates but finally nods. William bangs on the roof of the carriage. It takes off.

Elizabeth peeks out of the window-

EXT. TOWER AND CLIFF - DAY

- She sees the TOWER receding in the horizon.

Victor standing outside, waving them farewell. And then, entering the Tower.

INT. TOWER - HOLDING CELL / CHUTE - DAY

The Creature listens to the footsteps above. He is agitated, worried- feeling guilt and apprehension.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The door opens.

It's Victor.

The Creature takes a few steps- timid, extending his hands, lowering his head, like a whipped dog returning to his master.

VICTOR

Nothing to worry about. All is just fine.

CUT TO:

INT. HARLANDER'S CARRIAGE - DAY

Elizabeth feels anguished.

ELIZABETH

Oh, God- turn around.

(beat)

You go to Vienna- I have the most terrible feeling... I am afraid...

WILLIAM

My dear, I-

She opens the door!

ELIZABETH

Turn the carriage around- or I will jump.  
He is going to kill him.

INT. TOWER - HOLDING CELL / CHUTE - DAY

Victor has placed PETROL CANS all around The Creature's bed.

He moves towards him.

VICTOR

Say one word more- show me you understand. Make me save you...

CREATURE

Elizabeth.

And with that, he seals his fate. Victor adjusts The Creature's chains- TAUT (!)

And kisses him on the forehead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR  
Now go- sleep well... it will all be quick...

The Creature mimics his mouth movement but almost entirely without sound: "Quick"

Victor is shocked- was that a word??? Is The Creature intelligent after all??

He hesitates- but turns around and looks at The Creature one last time.

INT. TOWER - LAB - DAY

Victor takes a look- he has arranged DOZENS OF PETROL CANS around the batteries.

Victor collects all photographic evidence- sees the LETTER William delivered to him- from the ROYAL SOCIETY- tosses it on a pile with all his own NOTES and leaves them behind.

He moves away- the letter falls off the pile- and down-

A grate- Victor upturns one of the petrol cans. The liquid pours-

INT. TOWER - HOLDING CELL / CHUTE - DAY

The Creature sees the liquid. It FLARES UP-

CREATURE  
Sun...

INT. HARLANDER'S CARRIAGE - DAY

ELIZABETH  
Hurry- he is going to kill him!!

WILLIAM  
*Him?!*

INT. TOWER - LAB - DAY

RAIN pours into the lab.

A terrible moment.

Victor makes a decision. He overturns TWO of the PETROL containers-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Liquid snakes towards the batteries...

INT. TOWER - HOLDING CELL / CHUTE - SAME

The liquid pours down the chute- The Creature watches it raining on the other PETROL CANS.

INT. TOWER - LAB - SAME

Victor lights a MATCH-

He takes his Satchel, his PORTABLE LAB BOX and leaves-

INT. TOWER - STAIRCASE / LOBBY - SAME

Victor takes the stairs and heads for the exit. More PETROL CANS all around!!

INT. TOWER - HOLDING CELL / CHUTE - SAME

FIRE rains into the Holding Cell via the chute.

The Creature starts growing anxious...

CREATURE  
Victor!! Victor!! Victor!!

He tries to escape- but he is chained!

EXT. ROAD TO TOWER - DAY

Victor runs down the road- exhausted, agitated, tremulous!

Rain falls- plumes of breath explode from his mouth-

He covers his ears- the world is silent again. Just like that time in childhood when his mother died.

INT. TOWER - LAB - DAY

An EXPLOSION- A BATTERY TOPPLES- IT BREAKS!!! The ACID and fire start to pour down the vents.

EXT. ROAD TO TOWER - DAY

Gradually, he makes a decision- drops his equipment and turns-

He will go back!

He runs up the road - will he make it in time?

A final EXPLOSION!

EXT. TOWER AND CLIFF - DAY

Victor is thrown by the shockwave!

Through the storm!

He hits a rock face and loses consciousness.

His leg is broken and on fire. Bone exposed- blood everywhere...

Rain falls over him.

THE CARRIAGE pulls onto the road.

Elizabeth gets out, running.

She falls to the ground as the tower collapses-

ELIZABETH

No!! No!!

VICTOR (V.O.)  
But that was not the end of it...

FADE OUT/IN:

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

The end of Victor's Tale.

VICTOR  
You saw it. No one can stop it.  
(beat)  
In seeking life, I created Death. I  
tried the Master's tools and cut  
myself... Deliver me from it all...  
lower me to the ice field and be  
done with me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A commotion. Captain Anderson picks up his RIFLE- signals Victor to stay still-

EXT. SHIP'S DECK - NIGHT

Captain Anderson goes out- The Creature has climbed on board and is heading towards his chambers.

CREATURE  
VICTOR!!!

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

The Captain locks himself in, but The Creature breaks the door- SLAMS IT OPEN- cracking it!!

Disarms Anderson.

For a moment, he looks ready to destroy him- pummel him- his fist raised in formidable fury but then-

VICTOR  
Take me!! Do not extinguish another life!! I am here!! Take mine instead!!

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
You will have to take us both- he has told me his tale- but I do not fear you- Beast!

CREATURE  
"Beast"?  
(beat)  
His tale?

He looks at Victor then the Captain.

He looks back at a WOUNDED LARSEN and a DOZEN BLOODYED, SAILORS waiting outside the door. They back away in terror.

CREATURE (CONT'D)  
Then I will tell you mine.

The Creature closes the door.

**SUPER: PART II: THE CREATURE'S TALE**

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

CREATURE

I remember the pain- more than anything else. And the fear I felt as the world caught fire...

BACK TO:

INT. TOWER - HOLDING CELL / CHUTE - DAY

THE BATTERY CRACKS!! EXPLODES!!!

ACID burns The Creature's skin. He screams!!!

He renews his efforts to break free.

CREATURE

Victor! Victor! Elizabeth!

CREATURE (V.O.)

*Again and again, I called your name- and hers- and rapidly understood I was alone- and that- for the pain to cease- I had no one to call upon, but myself...*

EXT. TOWER - SAME

The explosions start!!!

The entire structure starts to collapse!!

INT. TOWER - HOLDING CELL / CHUTE - SAME

ROCKING THE LAB!!!

Cracking the central pillars- shattering the batteries.

The Cylinder lid explodes-

A piece of ceiling destroys the acid containers!!

ACID splashes onto The Creature as he stands in the middle of the lab- chained.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Creature breaks free of his manacles and brutally tears the skin of his left hand away- ligaments and bone EXPOSED to the forearm!!!

He rips it off!! Free!!!

Now the Creature heads for-

The Doorway!

The tower trembles- COLUMNS crack and bulge- part of the CEILING COLLAPSES DOWN!!

He retreats, barely in time to-

The body chute!!

He runs to it just as the rest of the ceiling collapses!!

And jumps in, barely able to avoid being crushed-

EXT. TOWER AND CLIFF - DAY

BAMMM!!! The final fireball takes the structure down!

INT. TOWER - CHUTE - DAY

The Creature slides down the chute as it fractures from the explosion-

He falls down-

EXT. CLIFF AND LAKE - DAY

Down into the LAKE! Light from the explosions above suffuse the water-

Debris, fire- it all rains onto the water.

The Creature sinks-

Thunder and lightning illuminate his silhouette as he fades out-

*CREATURE (V.O.)*

*Then there was darkness and the quiet of death- just a lull- barely enough to sooth the pain- and then- life jolted me back!*

EXT. SEA CLIFF BEACH - DAWN

GASPING- The Creature regains consciousness-  
He slowly incorporates.

Desperately inhaling, coughing water, almost vomiting-  
Convulsive, spasmodic rhythms shudder through his frame,  
then he stops.

Nothing but the sound of the lapping waves at the shore.  
He examines his injuries. His back is steaming-  
But his hand has regrown. Scarred but complete.

The Creature grimaces. Gets up and turns around, facing the  
immense steely lake:

In the distance, on the other shore: the ruins of the Tower.  
Smoldering.

The Creature takes a few steps: sand, rocks-  
He cannot make sense of the myriad of feelings that arise  
from the soles of his feet-  
He looks at the forest. The water at his feet. RETREATS from  
the waves but eventually allows the water to wash his feet.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The Creature walks through the forest.  
He looks around- the trees sway in the wind. Creaking.  
Wonder.  
Marvel.  
Miracles everywhere.

EXT. CLEARING IN THE WOODS - DUSK

The Creature walks for what seems like ages.  
Distant thunder.  
Rainclouds.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

In an OVERGROWN CLEARING, he encounters a MOSS-FUSED ROW OF FIVE SKELETAL CORPSES in Military UNIFORM.

RAVENS fly away as The Creature approaches.

He steals a long OFFICER JACKET from one of them- covers himself.

He grabs a decomposing skull and looks at it, Hamlet-like.

Ravens fly above him- he follows them.

INT. FOREST / CHERRY BUSH WATERFALL - DUSK

The Creature sees some RAVENS and a YOUNG DEER feeding on a tree of RED BERRIES by a WATERFALL.

The Creature approaches. The Birds scatter.

The Deer stays, eating the fruit, slowly.

The Creature watches it eat.

He looks at the berries, takes a few, devours them-

Grabs them by the handful. RED JUICE explodes-

He loves the flavor, grunts with pleasure- almost a laughter.

CREATURE

*Victor...*

He picks up some berries, offers them to the deer.

The Deer hesitantly approaches his hand. Eats from it.

The Creature pats the deer-

Suddenly he hears a gunshot blast!

A CLOUD OF BLOOD explodes from the deer's head.

The Creature splattered with blood specks. Gets up.

TWO OLD HUNTERS react to his presence.

He heads towards them. They Shoot at him. A BULLET tears a slice of his shoulder-

The Creature staggers back with a ROAR!

The Old Hunters run away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Creature sees his own blood. Limps away.

TIME CUT TO:

EXT. MILL - DUSK

The Creature runs through the tree line-

Slight rainfall starts. The Creature hides from it-

He spots a distant structure: An abandoned mill. The WHEEL, corseted by a large canvas. The Creature heads there.

INT. MILL - STORAGE AND GEARS - NIGHT

The Creature seeks refuge from the rain and the cold. He finds it between the massive gears of the Mill.

He installs himself there. He finds straw and uses it to pad his refuge. A snug fit between the gears.

A Handful of MICE poke their heads out and watch him. The Creature moves- they run away! Another mouse comes back and peeks at him.

The Creature moves towards it- it escapes too.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WOODED AREA - DAWN

The Sun rises on the horizon. A carriage arrives at the Mill. A YOUNG HUNTER with his FAMILY dismounts and opens the doors to the main building.

He waves at two people approaching the building--

It's the TWO OLD HUNTERS with their guns (!)

INT. MILL - STORAGE AND GEARS / EXT. MILL HOUSE - DAWN

The Creature awakes- voices and a light clutter- feet shuffling.

He tries to peek through the slats of the MILL WALL: The ADJACENT MILL HOUSE is visible: whitewashed and clean but very bare of furniture.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

YOUNG HUNTER  
Sit, sit, Father- we will bring you  
soup...

BLIND MAN  
You are too kind to me...

The YOUNG HUNTER and his WIFE are opening windows, airing the house, uncovering furniture, sweeping, cleaning.

The Creature follows the Young Hunter and sees him go out the door.

Through the door slat in the GEAR ROOM he sees a CART parked in front of the mill house, LOADED with Baggage and SACKS of utensils.

EXT. MILL - DAY

A LITTLE GIRL, 10 years of age- hair as black as a raven's wing- runs around and demands to be held by an Old Man. By his gestures and eye-line it is clear to us that he is a BLIND MAN.

The Creature observes as the TWO OLD HUNTERS join the family.

OLD HUNTER 1  
We looked everywhere. Could not  
find that thing-

INT. MILL - STORAGE AND GEARS / INT. MILL HOUSE - DAY

The Creature recoils in recognition. Timidly it comes back to peer inside:

OLD HUNTER 1  
The blood trail died about a mile  
from here...

YOUNG HUNTER  
Was it a bear?

OLD HUNTER 2  
That was no bear. Or human...

The Creature recoils at the sight of their weapons.

HUNTER'S WIFE  
Was it a ghost, then?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLD HUNTER 2  
We drew blood. It was flesh and bone.

HUNTER'S WIFE  
Well- sit with us- share some brandy.  
Help us unload. We will settle here  
until Spring- when the Mill reopens.

The Blind Man pats the head of the Young Girl.

The Creature pats his own head.

INT. MILL HOUSE / INT. MILL - STORAGE & GEARS - DUSK

Everyone sits around the fire drinking BRANDY and dancing to a tune played by the Blind Man on a BALALAIKA.

The Young Girl dances to it. The Young Hunter and his Wife too.

The Creature smiles with them... moves with the music.

EXT. DEEP MOSSY FOREST - DAY

Hiding in the forest, The Creature (STUBBLED) follows the Blind Man and The Little Girl (carrying a wicker basket).

*CREATURE (V.O.)*  
*The Old Man moved me. I found him*  
*so beautiful and kind.*

EXT. FLOWER FIELD / MOSSY FOREST - DAY

The Creature watches as the Blind Man plays the Balalaika and the Little Girl dances.

*CREATURE (V.O.)*  
*His hair shone like the sun and his*  
*unseeing eyes were full of wisdom*  
*and sadness in equal measure-*

The Blind Man laughs and the Little Girl braids flowers in his beard.

BLIND MAN  
Pick up some for your mother  
Annamaria- She would like that...

LITTLE GIRL  
Some for her. Some for you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Blind Man laughs.

REVERSE SHOT: The Creature moves away.

CREATURE (V.O.)

*These people possessed a sound-  
used it to tell each other about  
feelings and ideas- to make each  
other laugh or cry- or feel sad.  
They called them- words... and I  
started to learn them...*

INT. MILL HOUSE - DAY

The Blind Man uses a BLACKBOARD and LITHOGRAPHED CARDS to teach words to the Little Girl.

He feels the edges and surface to know what they are-

BLIND MAN

Now, Annamaria- what is this here?

GIRL

The Sun!

BLIND MAN

Very well, child, very well- "S" for SUN... and this?

GIRL

The Moon!

CREATURE (V.O.)

*As the months went by- I learned  
some of these words- and each  
sounded precious to me...*

INT. MILL - STORAGE AND GEARS - SAME

The Creature (STUBBLED) repeats softly-

CREATURE

Moon.

INT. MILL HOUSE - DAY

The Blind Man senses the Creature's voice. Keeps going with the lesson.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BLIND MAN  
"M" for Moon...

EXT. FIELD - DUSK

Through the forest. The Young Hunter and the TWO OLD HUNTERS chop and collect FIREWOOD-

YOUNG HUNTER  
We need large trunks for the structure-  
Tie the rope to that one...

Old Hunter 1 and 2 use their SCYTHES to peel off branches.

The Creature (SHORT HAIR) watches...

EXT. MILL HOUSE - DUSK

They drag a LARGE LOG back towards the house.

CREATURE (V.O.)  
*I longed to be part of this family-  
to be their benefactor somehow... But  
what, what could I do for them?*

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

The Creature (SHORT HAIR) gathers a large PILE OF FIREWOOD-

He senses something- and sees a shadow in the forest: A WOLF-

And ANOTHER ONE.

The Creature lifts an enormous LOG and carries it effortlessly.

THROUGH THE FOREST-

ANOTHER WOLF (The ALPHA)- locks eyes with The Creature and then disappears.

EXT. MILL HOUSE - DAY

Inside shot: The door opens.

HUNTER'S WIFE  
Father! Father! Who did this- who?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The family comes out to discover a GIANT PILE OF FIREWOOD by their doorstep. The Family is elated-

The Blind Man points at a GREEN MAN CARVING by the door.

BLIND MAN  
The Spirit of the Forest. Uh?  
Annamaria? We must thank him!!

They turn to a carving by the door: THE GREEN MAN

LITTLE GIRL  
Thank You, Spirit of the Forest!!

The Blind Man pats the Little Girl on the head.

INT. MILL - STORAGE AND GEARS - DAY

The Creature (SHORT HAIR, watching through the slats) feels giddy and moved- they liked this act, this simple kindness.

CREATURE  
Thank You-

He pats himself on the head.

EXT. PROPERTY LINE - DUSK

The Young Hunter builds a SHEEP CORRAL against the sunset.

The OLD HUNTERS help him hammer a POST with a HUGE WOODEN HAMMER. It is arduous work.

EXT. PROPERTY LINE - NIGHT

The Creature (HALF HAIR) completes the Corral at Night-

CREATURE (V.O.)  
*From then on, I became their invisible benefactor- the Spirit of the forest and on occasion, they too extended a small kindness towards me... Clothes, bread- And for a moment- a brief, brief moment- the world and I were at peace... and I belonged it...*

EXT. MILL HOUSE - NIGHT

The Creature (HALF HAIR) finds boots and some clothes on the edge of the steps. And a WHITE FLOWER. He smiles.

EXT. SHEEP CORRAL - DUSK

The Young Hunter, and the TWO OLD HUNTERS- usher a DOZEN SHEEP into the CORRAL. Close the gate.

The Blind Man and the Little Girl feed the sheep.

They laugh. The Blind Man feels a presence...

INT. MILL - GEARS AND STORAGE - DUSK

The Creature laughs with them...

INT. MILL HOUSE - DAY

LITTLE GIRL

"The prize of joy the fall of pride-  
reward the boy- whose heart won't hide."

The family shares some bread and milk. The Little Girl reads from a book. The Young Hunter smokes.

LITTLE GIRL (CONT'D)

"...And in the end the proud young man could never find his missing hand. It turned to stone, his fortune gone, and he lost his pride and lost his land..."

They all laugh and clap.

INT. MILL - STORAGE AND GEARS - DAY

Suddenly- a ruckus-

YOUNG HUNTER

Wolves-

He grabs a gun.

HUNTER'S WIFE

Stay in the house Annamaria!!

INT. MILL - STORAGE AND GEARS - DAY

The Creature hears the ruckus-

WOLVES encircle the home. They SNIFF under the gear room door!!

ONE OF THE WOLVES attacks a SHEEP!!!

EXT. MILL HOUSE - DAY

The Young Hunter chases them with his shotgun. Kills one. He looks into the CORRAL: A SHEEP has been GUTTED. Two more lay dead.

*CREATURE (V.O.)*

*An idea- a feeling- became clear to me- the hunter did not hate the wolf- the wolf did not hate the sheep- but violence felt inevitable between them- perhaps, I thought, this was the way of the world...*

EXT. MILL HOUSE - DUSK

The Young Hunter flays the Wolf. His Wife assists. The TWO OLD HUNTERS smoke pipes.

YOUNG HUNTER

The sheep will be sold by the end of the month, Father. I will take Alma and Annamaria to town- we will go into the mountains, hunt the wolves and be back for you at the end of Winter.

The Creature watches the process with intense curiosity.

INT. MILL - STORAGE AND GEARS - DUSK

The Creature listens.

EXT. MILL HOUSE - DUSK

The Hunters carry their belongings on their backs and move away.

EXT. MILL - BY THE MILL WHEEL - DUSK

Out in the open, The Creature- half hidden by the Mill Wheel-  
watches them go-

The Blind Man waves them goodbye. He then feels the air and  
mutters:

BLIND MAN  
It is just you and I, now, Spirit...

And goes back into the house.

INT. MILL - STORAGE AND GEARS - NIGHT

The Creature watches the Blind Man- thinks. Holds the MOUSE  
in his hand.

EXT. MILL HOUSE - NIGHT

The Creature emerges from his hiding place and heads for the  
house.

The Creature timidly approaches the door of the house-

CREATURE (V.O.)  
*I had formed- in my imagination, the  
many ways I would present myself to the  
Old Man, and his reception of me. Would  
he fear me? Welcome me? Turn me away?  
And then- I simply did it...*

And opens the door-

CREATURE (V.O.)  
*And with a single step- I entered a  
different world... one I had only seen  
from afar...*

BLIND MAN  
Who is there? Come in, please- I cannot  
easily go to you...

The Creature enters.

CREATURE  
I stepped into an entirely New World...

INT. MILL HOUSE - NIGHT

His FEET cross the threshold!!

He looks around, marveling at it all- as if it has crossed into the other side of the looking glass-

He is IN the world he has only observed so far.

He looks back at the broken slats through which he viewed this world- A miracle.

BLIND MAN

Who are you?

The Creature almost turns away and leaves.

BLIND MAN (CONT'D)

Please- dear Gentleman- what are you doing here?

CREATURE

Travel-

BLIND MAN

Oh, enter, enter dear traveller- Do not think me ungrateful for the company if I ask you to procure a chair for yourself... I find it difficult to be a good host- my sight, you see, it has failed me- but there is some bread and brandy on the table. Help yourself...

The Creature brings the bottle- not knowing what to do with it.

BLIND MAN (CONT'D)

Your language- you have a hard time speaking it... are you not from these parts?

CREATURE

No-

The bottle falls- breaks- The Creature is scared.

BLIND MAN

Are you afraid?

CREATURE

Afraid.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BLIND MAN  
No need to be. What are you afraid of?

Long pause and then:

CREATURE  
All.

The Blind Man nods gravely, gently as if he shares his condition.

He pats and holds The Creature's hand.

BLIND MAN  
Your hands are frozen and- you- you have been hurt. Have you not? Your hand- your face has scars-

The Creature surrenders to this simple kindness and embraces the Blind Man.

CREATURE  
Hurt.

BLIND MAN  
You wear a uniform and scars- were you injured in battle? Do you remember where you came from?

CREATURE  
No.

BLIND MAN  
Oh, oh- my dear man- please- do not despair... I understand your condition... better than you would think... And I think we have been acquainted somehow, have we not?

The Creature emits a pleasurable grunt.

BLIND MAN (CONT'D)  
Yes-yes- I cannot judge you by your countenance, but there is something in your voice which persuades me of your good will and kindness...  
(sotto)  
You- you have been hiding in the Mill gears, have you not...?

He points at the wall from which The Creature peeks into the family's life.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BLIND MAN (CONT'D)  
...Spirit of the Forest...?

CREATURE  
Yes...

BLIND MAN  
Oh, my poor man- stay with me. Share my food and fire. I will be delighted to share what little I have... and will be greatly helped by your companionship. Make this your home and I, your friend...

CREATURE  
Friend...

The Blind Man touches his shoulder. The Creature forces his hand to pat his head- then embraces him. The Blind Man embraces him back. A SONG fades in.

INT. MILL HOUSE - DUSK

The Blind Man feels his way through his BOOKSHELF and takes a book. He feels the pages and offers it to The Creature- open on a page where AN ARCHANGEL is expelling ADAM AND EVE.

CREATURE (V.O.)  
And then, I read my first story- and it was the first story. I read about a man named Adam and a woman named Eve- about their time in the first garden, and I was in that garden-

EXT. MOSSY FOREST - DUSK

The Blind Man and The Creature walk hand-in-hand through a Moss-covered, magical forest. Sit by the river. The Creature reads to him.

EXT. MILL HOUSE / GARDEN - DUSK

Guided by the Blind Man, The Creature harvests vegetables-

CREATURE (V.O.)  
And then I read about the rise of rival cities and the collapse of a tower and the wrath of a God- and I read poetry that was like music, and about men that fought dragons... and men who lost everything...

INT. MILL HOUSE - DUSK

The Creature reads from an old Bible- while the Blind Man finishes a meager MEAL. A PILE OF BOOKS is on the table.

The Creature gets up from reading, hits his head on a PULLEY. They both laugh!

*CREATURE (V.O.)*  
*...and time passed and fell away*  
*with the leaves of Autumn...*

EXT. MILL HOUSE - DUSK

SNOW IS FALLING- gentle but abundant.

The Creature steps outside- marvels at the pristine landscape.

BLIND MAN

Have you never seen the snow, my dear friend? It makes the world clean and new.

A MIRACLE.

EXT. MILL HOUSE - ROOFTOP - DUSK

The CREATURE climbs to the roof and looks at the white landscape and closes his eyes, feeling the sun. He is exhilarated!!

*CREATURE (O.S.)*  
*"And on the pedestal, these words appear: My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings..."*

INT. MILL HOUSE - DUSK

CREATURE  
"Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair! Nothing beside remains. Round the decay of that colossal Wreck, boundless and bare The lone and level sands stretch far away."

The Creature returns a BOOK OF POETRY to the shelf.

*CREATURE (CONT'D)*  
Many books- you have many-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BLIND MAN  
Oh, no- no- barely a few, my dear friend-  
(beat)  
But I know them all by heart. As do  
you by now, I would venture.

CREATURE  
Are there more books than these...?  
Somewhere?

The Blind Man chortles.

BLIND MAN  
Ha! A few more, I'm sure- Not here.

CREATURE  
What is in them? More people? Places?  
Answers?

BLIND MAN  
Questions, really-  
(beat)  
Last book on the left- take it. We  
haven't got to it.

The Creature takes the book: PARADISE LOST.

BLIND MAN (CONT'D)  
Paradise Lost- Milton. Man has questions  
for God... even God has questions, I  
venture- I think he wanted answers and  
that is why he sent us his son...

CREATURE  
To live-

BLIND MAN  
Rather, to die, wouldn't you say? He  
created life- but I would say, death  
possibly intrigued him... suffering...  
(beat)  
Take the book. Take it with you. My gift.  
Take it wherever you go, after this.

CREATURE  
After this...?  
(beat)  
I want to know who I am... where did I  
come from? I cannot remember... will I  
find that answer in a book?

BLIND MAN  
Knowledge only increases sorrow, my son.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CREATURE  
I still *want* to know.

BLIND MAN  
God took your memory, just as I wish he would take mine away... many years ago- I took a man's life- a good man- and I have been atoning for it since. Penance. Every winter- while God circles outside my door... reminding me of my sins.

(beat)  
Forgive, forget. The true measure of wisdom. To know you have been harmed, by whom you have been harmed, and choose to let it all fade.

CREATURE  
I cannot forget what I cannot remember...

BLIND MAN  
True. That is true. Do you recall nothing?

CREATURE  
In my dreams- I see moments- memories- as if they were someone else's- different men- sometimes complete-

BLIND MAN  
I understand... your head might have been injured- your memories lost...  
(beat)  
You should retrace your steps... go back to the last thing you remember...

CREATURE  
I remember fire and water- sand under my feet...  
(beat)  
...and a word-

BLIND MAN  
What is it?

CREATURE  
Victor...

BLIND MAN  
Go to it- that word.

EXT. LAKE - DUSK

Snow falls. The Creature walks back to the beach on which he awoke.

From its shore he can see the remains of the Tower at the edge of the cliff above.

EXT. TOWER - DUSK

The Creature enters the ruins.

INT. TOWER - LOBBY - DUSK

SNOWFLAKES dance all around him. SNOW covers the floor. Glazing the burnt remains with a coat of purity.

The Creature puts the MOUSE away in his pocket.

Victor's notes: graphic evidence of his creation-

Frantically, he turns burnt page after burnt page-

Broken DAGUERROTYPEs.

CREATURE

No... no... no... Not me...

The mirror-like surface of the Daguerrotypes reflects his own face- ALMOST superimposed to the close up of the carnage...

CREATURE (V.O.)

*And then I learned it- the horror of the truth...*

He finds photos and daguerrotypes of the SURGICAL ASSEMBLY of his body. Of the cruel, brutal traceries of exposed sinew, muscle and bone. Pages of the diary, with sketches by Victor.

He sees himself in the mirror (that was in Leopold's and Victor's room)- he is broken- burnt.

CREATURE (V.O.)

*I understood that I had nothing- I was nothing. A wretch- a blot- not even of the same nature as man. A puzzle of gristle and bone...*

*(beat)*

*(MORE)*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CREATURE (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
This hurt clung to my mind and,  
having seized upon it, it never  
let go-

At the base of the mirror- he finds a WOODEN CUBE, with an EYE- and under the rubble: THE ROYAL SOCIETY LETTER from GENEVA.

He reads a name:

CREATURE  
Victor... Frankenstein... Geneva...

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The Creature hurries into the snow- heading back to the Mill.

EXT. MILL HOUSE - NIGHT

The Creature arrives to the house-

He notices-

The door to the mill house is open. The ALPHA WOLF standing at the doorway- calm- serene.

The Wolf turns back into the house.

CREATURE  
No... Friend...

He runs to the house!

INT. MILL HOUSE - NIGHT

The Creature enters the house- blood everywhere- SIX WOLVES inside. The Blind Man is bleeding on the floor.

THREE WOLVES charge at The Creature!!

The Creature fights them off.

Rips the fur clean of one, smashes the other with a single blow to the head.

Yet another- the Alpha- with a broken spine.

The Rest of the pack RUNS AWAY!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Creature finds the Blind Man: wounded, bleeding badly.

EXT. MILL HOUSE - MAIN GATE - NIGHTFALL

The THREE HUNTERS come back. They look at the house- the door open, light spilling out.

The Young Hunter readies his weapon.

INT. MILL HOUSE - NIGHT

BLIND MAN

You came back... did you- find peace,  
my dear friend? Did you...?

He exhales one last time. The Creature wells up-

CREATURE

I found what I am- what I am made  
from- I am- the child of a charnel  
house- a wreckage- assembled from  
refuse and the discarded dead- a  
monster.

BLIND MAN

Nothing is monstrous in the mind of  
God. I know what you are- a good man-  
and you are... my friend...

CREATURE

Friend- friend- friend-

Just then, a group of MEN enter the house: It's the Young Hunter with the two Old Hunters, carrying weapons and the pelts of WOLVES.

They scream upon seeing The Creature, covered in blood and carrying the Blind Man's body.

YOUNG HUNTER

What is that thing?! What is that?!  
What has it done to my father?!

OLD HUNTER 1

Put him down!! Down!! On the Ground!!

The Creature obeys. Gets up, hits the hanging lamp- he laughs.

A MUSKET SHOT rips his throat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Old Hunter 1 embeds a scythe deep into The Creature's clavicle.

The Creature RIPS THE JAW off Old Hunter 1! And then staggers away-

EXT. MILL HOUSE / PORTICO - NIGHT

The Creature walks in the snow- removes the scythe, leans against the PORTICO to the cabin-

They shoot at him- splintering the wooden post.

He turns. One final shot- in the head.

The Creature's breath grows shallow. Steam escapes from an open throat wound and his forehead.

*CREATURE (V.O.)*

*A strange calm came over me- and pain left... the snow and the silence became one- my breath slowed down... And I surrendered to the benign indifference of the snow...*

He looks into the night sky- and sees the moon, being crossed by a passing cloud.

The Creature extends his hand. THE MOUSE is nearby- finally, it approaches The Creature- climbs on his hand.

The Creature smiles and dies.

CUT TO BLACK:

*CREATURE (V.O.)*

*There was silence again- and then... again... merciless... Life-*

EXT. PORTICO - DAY

A wide shot.

The Creature is blanketed in snow. Covered. Almost indistinguishable from the ground. And then-

He WAKES UP!! Gasping for air... And understands that he cannot die.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CREATURE (V.O.)  
*How long did I die for- I do not know, but I saw my injuries healed... the cold winter air stinging my lungs- everything around me was absence- and the moon floated indifferent above me... I felt lonelier than ever...*

His throat has a jagged scar. His forehead is closed.

CREATURE (V.O.)  
*Because for every man there was but one remedy to all pain: death--*  
*(beat)*  
*A gift you had too denied me.*

He tries to speak. Only grunts- He gets up... Looks at the moon. Raises his arms!

CREATURE (V.O.)  
*Envy rose within me and decided to demand a single grace from you, my creator...*

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

CREATURE  
I would demand a companion...

**SUPER: PART III: FATHERS AND SONS**

INT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - FOYER - DUSK

William in a pale pearl gala suit, moves nervously amongst the GUESTS.

INT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - LEOPOLD'S BEDROOM - DAY

Victor lies in bed.

He is half-dressed for a party-

The fireplace roars!!!

THE DARK ARCHANGEL APPEARS!! VICTOR RISES-

THE APPARITION REMOVES ITS FACE- revealing a GRINNING SKULL!!

A KNOCK- Victor awakes! William enters the bedroom.

WILLIAM

You better get up, Victor... The Wedding will start soon and I want you by my side...

VICTOR

Hard to believe... but for your kind nature...

WILLIAM

I love you Victor. But do not think me without turmoil or ache.

(beat)

The law has cleared you- a few guests have spoken to me about the inquest- about the explosion... but the majority accepts it for what it was...

VICTOR

And what was it, William-?

WILLIAM

The past, Victor. A terrible accident-

Victor nods, and uncovers his legs- or rather- leg. He is missing one. He places a prosthetic one on top and ties it to his vacant stump.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR  
I still feel it- it hurts- even itches-  
but it's not there anymore...

William lovingly helps him with the prosthetic leg- ties the leather strap for him.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
All of my life I thought I was protecting  
you, brother... But it is clear to me  
that it was the other way around.

WILLIAM  
I intend to sell the estate, Victor- it  
is a burden that neither of us want. A  
cold marble mausoleum.

Victor is moved. He nods.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)  
There is no life here... no future- I  
should have let it crumble a long  
time ago.

(beat)  
I need a life of my own. And  
Elizabeth will give me that. With  
Harlander gone- all we have is each  
other. I will share the profits with  
you and we will *both* be free of this  
edifice of sorrow.

Victor EMBRACES William. Tenderly.

VICTOR  
You- you are indeed the kindest man I  
ever met, *my brother*. And I love you.

OUTSIDE, snow falls: WINTER again.

EXT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - GARDEN - DUSK

CARRIAGES and GUESTS are arriving at the Villa in  
preparation for William's wedding. SERVANTS greet them.

The Creature is watching from the forest. In his hand: The  
BURNT LETTER with the address.

INT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - MOTHER'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Elizabeth is being dressed by TWO MAIDS- they leave.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We recognize the room- it is the room that formerly belonged to Victor's mother.

Victor knocks on the door- he enters.

ELIZABETH

It is bad luck to see the bride, Victor.

VICTOR

Only for the groom... not for me...

(beat)

Elizabeth- I rarely felt remorse before- but now... I feel little else. A fever held me, for so long- but it has passed... for whatever it is worth: I see you and my little brother- whom I love more than life- as I should.

(beat)

I wanted to say that... I wish you and William, the very best.

She regards him thoroughly and then-

ELIZABETH

You may like to believe you do- but- I dread to even hear you say it...

(beat)

On my wedding day I ask you but for a single grace: *no more lies...*

VICTOR

I would like to say-

She SLAPS HIM.

ELIZABETH

Leave my chambers. Now.

He leaves the chamber.

She opens a small bible once alone and - in it- the pressed LEAF The Creature gave her in the cell.

INT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - HEAVEN AND HELL ROOM - NIGHT

Lit by candlelight- Victor moves through it, heading for his room- muttering in rage.

INT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - LEOPOLD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Victor ties his bowtie in the mirror- he hears a NOISE-  
A window is open.

The wind blows all the candles.

SNOWFLAKES enter the room.

A quiet, tense prelude to tragedy.

Victor heads towards the window, slowly-  
Closes it.

VICTOR  
Step out of the shadows if you are  
here...

A NOISE.

He turns:

The Creature stands there, in front of his creator.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
Mm-hmm. Are you here to thank me...?  
Obviously I made you rather well- you  
survived. And I made you intelligent  
enough that you found your way here-  
(beat)  
Well- you are welcome...

CREATURE  
I need you to make- a companion- for  
me- like me...

VICTOR  
Oh- I see- another monster.

CREATURE  
Yes. So we can be monsters- together.

Victor thinks- and he simply says:

VICTOR  
No. No-

He looks at The Creature.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
I have found sanity at last- at such a cost- and you- here- you are madness- calling me back.

CREATURE  
You must. I cannot die- and I cannot live- alone-

Victor goes to a DRAWER and SLIDES IT OPEN: in it a GUN.

VICTOR  
Well- I will not do it. I'd rather be killed than surrender to the same darkness I did before... I am broken- I gave you life and died inside.

(beat)  
I created something horrible- and paid the price.

CREATURE  
Not something. *Someone*.  
(beat)  
You made *Someone*. Why? I do not know. You gave me no reason nor offered meaning... but me- whatever puzzle I am. The answer is- *Me!* I think- I feel- and- horrible as I may be- I have but this sole petition, creator... even beasts have a mate. Why should I be alone?

(beat)  
Let me feel gratitude towards you for this sole reparation, creator-  
(beat)  
Make- One- Like- Me-

VICTOR  
And then- what? Reproduction? Death begetting death- a dance of caskets and grey flesh- pressed against grey flesh- a home? A grave? Obscenity perpetuating itself?

CREATURE  
I am obscene to you. But to myself- I simply am.

VICTOR  
No- no- and with my dying breath: NO.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CREATURE

Then... It is all still about *your* will,  
is it not? That horrible, horrible will  
that birthed me and condemns me now.

The Creature throws him around- violently.

CREATURE (CONT'D)

The miracle is not that I would speak-  
but that you would ever listen.  
(beat)

You only listen when I hurt you. So-  
we will talk-

He tosses him again. He crashes through the bedpost and  
against the glass of his Father's HUNTING WEAPONS ARMOIRE.  
Exposing rifles and handguns.

INT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - FOYER - SAME

Below, the Partygoers hear the ruckus. William amongst them-

INT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - MOTHER'S CHAMBERS - SAME

Elizabeth hears the ruckus and turns- she is on the move.

INT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - LEOPOLD'S BEDROOM - SAME

CREATURE

If you are not to award me Love, then  
I will indulge in rage- for mine is  
infinite...

Elizabeth enters the room. Backlit by the fireplace: A Bride  
in white- a beautiful vision.

The Creature recognizes her and takes a step forward-

He hums TRAVERTINE.

She hums it back.

She approaches The Creature-

They embrace gently.

Victor bleeding, on the floor, is horrified.

He lunges for a table and, in the drawer, he finds a PISTOL.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Raises it towards the monster.

Elizabeth sees him and-

ELIZABETH

No- no-

Victor fires!!

She pushes the creature away! Takes the bullet herself!!

The Guests BREAK DOWN the door.

WILLIAM

Elizabeth!!

VICTOR

He attacked her- He attacked her!!

A few Guests and William charge at the Creature- who pushes them back, tossing them- flinging them off- snapping them loose!! William stumbles and hits the wall- cracking his head- staining the floor with his blood.

The Creature picks up Elizabeth and leaves.

Victor turns, approaches William- injured fatally.

EXT. FRANKENSTEIN VILLA - STONE STEPS - NIGHT

The Creature takes Elizabeth's body down the majestic stone steps-

DOZENS OF GUESTS watch as he goes-

The Creature carries Elizabeth towards the snow-covered mountains.

INT. FRANKENSTEIN'S VILLA - LEOPOLD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

VICTOR

You're wounded. You're losing too much blood-

WILLIAM

No. Let me- I do not want you near.

Victor examines William's wounded head- OOZING BLOOD with every heartbeat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR  
I can save you.

WILLIAM  
Save me-? From what- You? All is gone-  
(beat)  
And I fear you, Victor.  
(beat)  
I always have.  
(beat)  
Everyone does.  
(beat)  
There is not a trace of compassion in  
your mind, is there?  
(beat)  
You took Elizabeth from me. Let me go  
with her... for I have nothing left to  
stay for... You finally took it all.

VICTOR  
I did not- *He did.*

WILLIAM  
Every ounce of madness and destruction-  
the very conflagration that devoured *it*  
*all*- all came from you... Father feared  
you- did you know that? Did you? You and  
you alone remain the monster.

William exhales- dies. The BLOOD PULSATES ONCE MORE, and the  
torrent dies.

Victor gets up. Everyone in the room watches him in horror.

VICTOR  
Come with me- we will follow that  
creature- come with me and we will  
hunt him!

Everyone recoils away from Victor- horror in their faces.

He *is* the monster now.

He goes to a cabinet and takes a rifle and bullets.

EXT. CREVICE / THE MOUNTAIN - NIGHT

The Creature carries Elizabeth, injured, in his arms-  
A trail of scarlet blood leaves a tracery on the Virginal  
white snow. Snowflakes flurry in the air.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

The Creature embraces Elizabeth. Blood pools between them.

He sings TRAVERTINE to her.

She caresses his face.

CREATURE

The warmth of your blood escapes your body- my fingers, my hand, my will- can do nothing to stop it... and our encounter is thus doomed- brief- so brief...

ELIZABETH

My place was never in this world. Like you... I sought- and longed for something I could not quite name... but in you, I found it. To be lost and to be found- that is the lifespan of love. And in its brevity- in its tragedy- this has been made eternal...

(beat)

Better this way. To fade... with your eyes... gazing upon me...

She exhales.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

Nothing goes away... we all remain...

They embrace.

EXT. CREVICE - DAWN

The SUN rises- suffusing the MIST with a golden glow. Victor follows the footsteps to the CAVE ENTRANCE.

INT. CAVE - DAWN

Victor enters the cave.

The moving rays of dawn fall upon the inert Elizabeth. Victor puts down the rifle and contemplates-

- Her frozen face- eyes frosted, fixated upon the ether.

The SUN bathes the beautiful maiden, encased in crystal.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Now free.

CREATURE (O.C.)  
She is gone. And I long to follow-

Victor turns, The Creature comes out of the darkness and pins him against the rock.

VICTOR  
Kill me- kill me now-

CREATURE  
No. You gave me life unwanted- I give that back to you. You thought me a monster- I will return the favor- what should you lose? Your beauty?

He crushes Victor's nose with a flick of his thumb. Victor screams!

CREATURE (CONT'D)  
Silence your mouth- full of lies-?

He puts his hand in Victor's mouth and cracks three molars- Tosses them to the floor.

CREATURE (CONT'D)  
I will make you mute- I will make you humble-  
(beat)  
You are my creator, but I am your master. Like me- you will curse the hour of your birth. Alone and alive you will stand until I destroy you- or you unmake me.

He releases Victor and moves away.

Victor grabs his rifle and follows- panting-

He pauses at the mouth of the cavern. Steps into the mist.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAWN

The Creature waits for Victor.

Victor spots the distant figure-

He turns and heads for the mountains- Victor chasing after him-

He aims and shoots three times!!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

But The Creature does not topple.

Victor ascends, following the trail of blood.

CREATURE (V.O.)  
*You followed me- past the forests- past  
the mountain- past frozen horizon...*

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

The Creature looks at Victor.

CREATURE  
Until there was nothing left-  
(beat)  
Just the cold and you... and me...

EXT. WINTER OUTPOST - NIGHT

A lone outpost in the middle of nowhere.

SLEDS OF DOGS and CARRIAGES with PELTS are parked outside.

A Figure crosses and enters-

INT. WINTER OUTPOST - NIGHT

MANY TRAPPERS and HUNTERS seek refuge around POTBELLY STOVES and a COUNTER BAR. A few HUSKIES huddle around.

Victor (haggard and emaciated, dressed in FURS and LEATHER) approaches, places his rifle and revolver on the counter. He is poured a shot of whisky. He refuses it-

VICTOR  
Ammunition, canned milk- firewood-  
and six sticks of dynamite.

OUTPOST CLERK  
Six? What are you hunting?

VICTOR  
Big game-

Victor throws a few GOLD COINS- and his three molars-

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
I need my dogsled ready at dawn- dogs  
fed- I'm moving North-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OUTPOST CLERK  
North? This time of year?  
(beat)  
You will not make it back.

Victor picks up his molars.

VICTOR  
I know.

OUTPOST CLERK  
Take a bible, Brother- they are free.

VICTOR  
I'll take the dynamite instead.

EXT. FROZEN LANDSCAPE - DAY

Victor crosses a large frozen extension - the sun, high in the hazy horizon.

A DESERTED LANDSCAPE of SNOW...

EXT. NORTH POLE ESPLANADE - DUSK

A small TENT, ILLUMINATED from inside.

Outside, next to a flickering bonfire, the sled and dogs are being tied to a stake in the ground by Victor. He coughs- bad.

He spots The Creature in the distance. The DOGS are barking.

Victor enters the tent-

INT. TENT - NIGHT

Victor loads a pistol, puts his rifle by his side. Waiting.

POV: The light outside flickers.

Victor cocks the hammer on his gun, slowly.

FOOTSTEPS.

Victor suffocates a cough.

Through the opening in the tent- wind enters. Victor peeks-

A SHADOW - Victor fires six times - a SCREAM!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Through the bullet holes- he peeks. Nothing-

SUDDENLY- BAMM!!! THE EYE of The Creature is visible.

Victor recoils- shoots his rifle at an arm coming through- flesh and bone torn off by the TWIN BARRELED discharge!!

He eyes his satchel with the dynamite.

Suddenly, two hands snatch his legs and pull him brutally out of the tent.

He is dragged. He barely manages to grab the satchel!

He upturns the oil lamp!!

EXT. ICE ESPLANADE - NIGHT

Victor sees The Creature, dragging him.

The dynamite is dropping out of the open satchel. Victor manages to save one stick- the last one.

He fishes the matches outside of the Satchel.

The Creature stops- turns.

CREATURE

Vic-tor: WHAT are you doing?

He snatches the dynamite from Victor's hand.

Twists Victor's WOODEN LEG, with a loud CRACK! The brace sinks into Victor's skin and causes him great agony-

Victor pulls out his KNIFE - stabs the Creature in the leg- BAMM! And he is ready to strike again, when-

-his creation- takes the blade-

CREATURE (CONT'D)

"...And in the end the proud young man could never find his missing hand..."

-and crushes Victor's right hand.

Victor falls to the ground, in pain.

CREATURE (CONT'D)

"...It turned to stone, his fortune gone, he lost his pride- he lost his land."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Creature sinks the Knife into Victor's SHOULDER- THUNK!

The Creature fetches the dynamite. Victor pulls the knife out- bleeding.

CREATURE (CONT'D)  
You- put your faith- in this? *This?!*  
(beat)  
You- think- *this-* will unmake me?

The creature takes the bag- the rest of the sticks of dynamite- and matches. He hands them to Victor.

CREATURE (CONT'D)  
Light it then. And hope it does.  
(beat)  
But if it does not, I will come for you- again! And make you regret it.  
(beat)  
Light it... *Light it!!!*

Victor obeys. Trembling and covered in blood.

The Creature embraces the dynamite as if it was a baby- a prize- a cherished possession: tight upon his chest.

Victor crawls away and then gets up- limps away. Arm dislocated and bleeding, artificial limb almost entirely loose.

The Creature is engulfed by the EXPLOSION. A CRATER forms.

But- when the smoke clears: The Creature rises again: ONE EYE SOCKET is empty- His chest, jagged with wounds-

One of his hands with EXPOSED knuckles points at Victor:

CREATURE (CONT'D)  
Now- run-

EXT. ICE ESPLANADE - NIGHT

Victor escapes- runs and runs and runs: HE FALLS DOWN A SMALL MOUND.

His wooden leg has broken off almost entirely- causing him great pain.

Panting- coughing- he passes out-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CREATURE (V.O.)  
So- there you were- broken and  
discarded, and I- alive- again-  
(beat)  
I felt a despair- so profound- a  
loneliness that crushed my soul- I  
could feel my singed flesh regrowing-  
the crackling of my bones- resetting-  
the murmur of my blood- pumping  
through my merciless, incessant heart-  
thump- thump- thump- never in silence-  
horribly alive-  
(beat)  
And once more, finding no mercy- I had  
but one burning path- the path of rage...

The creature HOWLS!!! Then rises from the smoldering ice-  
and spots the TORCHLIGHT- HEARS THE MEN'S VOICES. Rises-  
SCREAMS!!!

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - DAWN

The Creature's narration has ended.

CREATURE  
And here we are- spent and done- no  
more in us... to give or take-

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
The blood outside the tent...

CREATURE  
Mine... All mine... I will bleed,  
ache- suffer- it will never end-

Victor weeps, quietly at first, but then barely able to  
contain a tremor on his chest he cries- and takes the  
Creature's hand- tenderly, for the first time.

VICTOR  
I am sorry- I am so terribly sorry...

CREATURE  
Are you...?

VICTOR  
More than I will ever be able to  
express or atone for. Clarity comes to  
me as I depart- and I regard my life  
for what it was: blind obedience to my  
pride...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Captain Anderson listens to this.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
Regret consumes me... And I am- so very-  
very sorry... and I wish- I wish- I wish-

The Creature looks away for a moment-

CREATURE  
You will go now, Creator- fade away-  
leave this world unchanged by your death-  
or my life.

(beat)  
It will all be but a moment: My birth,  
my grief, your loss...

(beat)  
I will not be punished- or absolved.

(beat)  
What hope I had- what rage I had- they  
will be unaimed without you. I will be  
barren. The tide that brought me here-  
will now take you away and I will be  
stranded.

VICTOR  
*Forgive me. My son... my victim.*

And it is this word that stabs The Creature's heart- a  
mortal wound- a spirit pierced- tears flow freely now...

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
And smile at me, for once, please... and  
if you have it in your heart: forgive  
yourself into existence... as will I...

(beat)  
For we are as much the other as we are  
ourselves. Perhaps even more... you are  
me, and I am you: Both bereft... as we  
all are-

(beat)  
So look at me as the father I never  
knew how to be- for all that will  
remain of me in this world... is you-

Holds the Creature's gaze.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
And if death is not to be, then consider  
this, my son- while you are alive- what  
recourse do you have... but to live?

Captain Anderson listens- moved.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

VICTOR (CONT'D)

My breath leaves me now- my pulse is but a murmur... and all I need to take with me is your forgiveness. Do not let go of my hand- and pray look into my eyes. Say my name- my father gave me that name- and it meant nothing... Now I beg you to give it back- to me- one last time...

(beat)

The way you said it at the beginning of our time- when it meant the world to you.

The Creature caresses Victor's cheek gently- a single stroke-

CREATURE

Victor- I forgive you- Father- I forgive you. Rest now, we can both be human now.

And, with that, Victor's eyes grow vacant. He exhales, and the Creature growls- a low, guttural sound-

A sound that bypasses words and notions of humanity, to express a profound, unfathomable loss.

He kisses Victor gently and then stands up. Captain Anderson moves aside-

EXT. SHIP'S DECK / FROZEN LANDSCAPE - DAWN

The Creature steps out-

The MEN recoil- ready their arms!

Anderson stops Larson from taking action.

CAPTAIN ANDERSON

No. Let him go...

The Creature steps onto the snow- turns to the ship. Looks up at Anderson.

And PUSHES the ship from the bow.

FREEING IT from the ice!! Sending it back to the OCEAN.

EVERYONE on board peers over.

The Creature turns and walks away...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARSEN  
(In Danish)  
Sir- what are your orders?

CAPTAIN ANDERSON  
(in Danish)  
Man the sails. We turn around.

EXT. FROZEN LANDSCAPE - DAWN

The Creature stands alone in the wasteland. He crests a small slope- The NASCENT SUN touches him with its dim rays.

He feels it- in his face and hands, and starts walking towards it- increasing his pace bit by bit- tears rolling down his cheeks-

*CREATURE (V.O.)*  
*Nothing goes away... We all remain...*

Hitting a stride just as the sun explodes on the horizon.

The light brings with it, exhilaration, and now the Creature is running-

Running for the pure pleasure of it. In the world. Alive. Alone.

He runs even faster- freer than he has ever been. Until his figure is swallowed by the storm and the impossible, eternal, bloom of the sun.

***"And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly live on."***

***-Lord Byron.***