

FRANKENSTEIN



Script

**recursos**

CHARACTERS

HENRY CLERVAL (VICTOR'S FRIEND)

JUSTINE MORITZ (WILMA'S HELPER AND HOUSEKEEPER)

MARY SHELLEY

R. WALTON (PUBLISHING HOUSE WORKER)

THE CREATURE

VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN

VOICES OF LORD BYRON AND PERCY SHELLEY

WILMA FRANKENSTEIN (FUTURE HENRY'S WIFE)



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ACT I

(There is a storm. Mary is on stage.)

(OFF) L. BYRON: Listen! There are witches on the wind... I have an idea. Each one of us is about to write a story. A ghost story. It's a competition, of course. Whoever writes the finest story shall win.

(Mary walks across the stage until she reaches a desk. There is a crib next to it. She picks up the baby and holds him for a few seconds. She sings to the baby.)

MARY: *"Tommy was a piper's son, he learned to play when he was young, the only tune, that he could play"*

(Then she puts the baby back in the crib.)

MARY: It was a wet, ungenial summer, and the incessant rain often confined us for days to the house. Some volumes of ghost stories translated from the German into French, fell into our hands. This gave rise to an idea: *"We will each write a ghost story"* said Lord Byron; and we agreed to this proposition.

(Mary sits down and starts writing.)

MARY: *"My name is Victor Frankenstein. Here I write the facts of my tragedy. It all started the day death knocked on my door."*

(The left side of the stage changes to Victor's laboratory. The barking of a dog, Prometheus, and Henry's laughter are heard. Enter Henry, with a small ball that he throws off the stage. He goes to the side and picks up the ball again, petting the dog to throw it again.)

HENRY: Prometheus, you are very naughty. Victor doesn't want you in the lab. Go and play outside.

(The ball is thrown at Henry's back.)

HENRY: Prometheus! That hurt, little devil!

(Henry crouches on the side of the stage and pets the dog. Justine enters.)

JUSTINE: And there we go again. Letting the dog into the laboratory.

HENRY: That is not true. Prometheus, go and play outside. Anyway. Good morning, Justine!

JUSTINE: Good morning, sir!

(Henry pretends to throw the ball and the dog walks away barking.)

JUSTINE: That animal should not exist.

(Wilma enters, walking with a cane. Justine helps her.)

WILMA: Justine, shouldn't you be cleaning the lab? Leave my dog alone.

JUSTINE: Of course, ma'am... cleaning dog hair is my thing.

WILMA: Prometheus is a good dog and you won't find any of his hair in this laboratory.

HENRY: Wilma! How do you feel today?

(They hug each other.)

WILMA: Great! My Henry!

(Victor enters. Henry throws the ball to Victor, and he catches it with his bare hands.)

VICTOR: No! Argh! No! You know I can't stand germs and I haven't put on gloves yet! I see bugs everywhere!

(Victor returns the ball and quickly pours water on his hands and scrubs with a scouring pad and soap. He puts on black gloves. Henry puts the ball in his jacket.)

WILMA: Germs and more germs! Unfortunately, everything that I don't see, he sees.

VICTOR: Good morning, everyone!

HENRY: Doctor!

WILMA: Good morning, brother!

JUSTINE: Good morning, sir!

(Dog is barking again.)

WILMA: Oh, Prometheus!

(Wilma approaches the side and takes what she thinks is the ball from the dog. But no, it's a dead bird.)

WILMA: What is this? This is not a ball!

HENRY: Oh no, Prometheus! Bad dog, come on, play with the ball!

(Henry throws the ball again and the dog walks away.)

VICTOR: Do not pick up the bird with your hands. Go wash them, sister.

(Justine helps her to wash her hands.)

HENRY: I am sorry, Wilma. Sometimes animals don't understand about life and death.

WILMA: No problem.

VICTOR: If we studied the occult sciences like Cornelius, we could bring that bird back to life.

HENRY: Don't start, Victor, we're scientists.

VICTOR: Your point of view is very correct and not at all risky. But maybe... If we use this...

(Victor talks about pseudoscience, the occult, parapsychology, astrology... And he takes the opportunity to administer some injections with liquids of various colours. At the end Victor throws the bird into the air.)

VICTOR: This is your opportunity. Fly my friend!

(The bird falls dead to the ground.)

HENRY: See? I had to have bet something. Death is the end and there is no possibility of returning to life.

(Henry picks it up and throws it in the bin.)

VICTOR: I want to continue having hope.

HENRY: I have hope. And I like to dream, and read poetry, but death beats any fiction.

VICTOR: Oh, come on Henry... We may not have invented it yet.
HENRY: Don't feel offended, the variety of opinions gives truth to all the possibilities.
WILMA: Boom!
VICTOR: I have to go, thanks for everything. Goodbye my ugly sister.
WILMA: Brother!
HENRY: Come on, Victor!

(Victor leaves the stage.)

HENRY: Don't blame him. Take care, my friend. Wilma, now... we are alone. I have to tell you something. You know that when I focus on something, I get nervous and...
WILMA: Calm down, Henry.
HENRY: Give me your hand.
WILMA: What?
HENRY: Please, give me your hand.

(Henry takes her hand and ties a bow on her finger with a thread.)

WILMA: Err...
HENRY: Be.. Be patient.

(Henry walks away with the thread and climbs behind the laboratory shelf. He threads the ring and it gradually slides down onto Wilma's finger.)

WILMA: What?
HENRY: Wilma... wait...

(Henry comes down from behind the bookshelf and you can hear him fall but he quickly gets back up and goes to Wilma.)

WILMA: Are you ok?
HENRY: Wilma... Will you marry me?
WILMA: Henry, this ring is very expensive.
HENRY: Is that a "no"?
WILMA: My answer is... yes.

(Henry celebrates effusively.)

WILMA: But remember, the important thing is not the ring, the important thing is us. Do you know what is more real than the ring?

(She takes his hand and kisses his forehead. Victor enters.)

VICTOR: Am I interrupting something?

WILMA: He asked me to marry him!

VICTOR: Yes, I knew it, he's been wanting to ask you for three months, but you know how he is.

WILMA: Three months?

VICTOR: Justine, come here!

(Justine enters.)

JUSTINE: Yes, sir?

VICTOR: We're done. You can clean everything up, thanks!

JUSTINE: Yes, sir.

VICTOR: That's enough for today's lab work. I have whiskey in the sitting room to celebrate.

(Victor, Wilma and Henry leave.)

ACT II

(Justine is cleaning the lab until she kicks Prometheus' ball.)

JUSTINE: Oh, the ball. Prometheus, take your stupid ball!

(She throws the ball but there is silence.)

JUSTINE: What's that?

(She walks to the side of the stage and sees the dog's tail on the floor.)

JUSTINE: Prometheus? Oh, no! No! Mr Victor. Sir!!!

(Justine takes a small blanket and puts it over the dog's body to wrap it up. She brings that inert body and places it on the table. Henry, Wilma and Victor enter.)

VICTOR: Wha's going on?

JUSTINE: I'm sorry, Wilma, I found him on the ground, Prometheus is... is...

WILMA: What have you done? Oh, no! Prometheus!

(Victor hugs her. Everyone feels dismayed.)

VICTOR: Let's calm down. He must have been infected by the bird. The bird probably had an illness. Justine, take off your cleaning gown and escort Henry and Wilma to their rooms. Take the day off.

JUSTINE: Of course, sir.

WILMA: Wait a moment! You gave that stupid food to my dog yesterday.

VICTOR: Wilma...

WILMA: You've given him poisoned food. Oh, my Prometheus... That's it... Right?

VICTOR: Wilma, enough!

JUSTINE: I found the dog...

VICTOR: Enough! Escort them to their rooms.

(Justine tries to help Wilma.)

WILMA: I can manage!

(The three leave the scene.)

VICTOR: Agripa said...: *"It is better therefore and more profitable to be idiots and know nothing, to believe by Faith and Charity, and to become next unto God, than being lofty and proud through the subtillies of sciences to fall into the possession of the Serpent"*.

(Victor mixes some substances on the table while saying those words. Then he pours the contents into a container near the bookcase. He pulls out a hose and carefully places it on the animal's body. He picks up a head device with electrodes and carefully places it on Prometheus.)

VICTOR: Sorry, sorry, sorry... my friend.

(Victor goes to a lever at the back of the laboratory. He tries to reach another one that is also on that wall, but he can't do it alone. After a second failed attempt, he calls Justine.)

VICTOR: I need some help. Justine! Come here please!

(Justine enters.)

JUSTINE: Sir. What do you need? Oh, my... What is going on?

VICTOR: This is not a good time to give explanations.

JUSTINE: But Miss Wilma...

VICTOR: NO! I mean... sorry. Wilma shouldn't know about this.

JUSTINE: Mister. I don't like keeping secrets. I'm not good at keeping secrets!

VICTOR: Just keep your mouth shut! Sorry... Please, help me with this. If I am able to give him life, she will get her dog back.

(Victor grips Justine's arms tightly.)

VICTOR: Please!

(Justine slowly walks to the other lever.)

VICTOR: We have to do it at the same time. On the count of three. Well. One, two, three!

(They lower the levers at the same time. You hear electrical noises but then something has gone wrong. Everything remains dark. The light returns and Victor approaches the animal. He smells burning. Justine is about to cry.)

JUSTINE: Sir. Can I retire to my room?

VICTOR: This whole thing has been a real waste of time.

JUSTINE: Sir...

VICTOR: YES!

(Victor has screamed. Justine is surprised and then hangs her head and leaves.)

VICTOR: Sorry! Demons with Agrippa, Paracelsus and Albert Magno. I'm sorry my friend.

(Victor takes a box and puts the animal's body inside while cursing his masters. He leaves the box on the table and exits the stage. It becomes dark and silence reigns in the room. Suddenly, a whimper from the dog sounds faintly.)

(Another groan and the box moves a little. The dog begins to growl angrily, the box moves abruptly, until it falls to the ground and the animal is heard walking away. Victor appears on the scene and crouches in front of the box.)

MARY (OFF): *“The next day I saw the box. I couldn't believe the dog was alive. We never saw the dog's body again. I told Henry and my sister that I buried Prometheus' body in the garden, but it was a lie, that dog had risen from the dead. Although at that moment, I didn't know that he came from hell, I only saw the triumph of my experiment. I became obsessed with giving life to death. I often visited the cemetery and collected limbs from human bodies. Little by little I was creating a human body as if it were a puzzle. No one could enter my laboratory. It was forbidden. Henry, Wilma and Justine could not enter the laboratory. They were worried about me, but I kept them out of it. And finally the day of creation arrived. I spent seven days gathering a body. It was time to create life”.*

(Victor carries a human head, sewing it to the body at the neck. He uses a saw to open the skull and insert a brain. Victor mixes some substances on the table while saying those words. Then he pours the contents into a container near the bookcase. He pulls out a hose and carefully places it on the creature's body. He picks up a head device with electrodes that causes electricity and carefully places it on the creature. He goes to the levers and thinks he needs another pair of hands.)

VICTOR: I don't think calling Justine is a good idea.

(Victor goes down to the audience and looks for a volunteer.)

VICTOR: Please, help me. Follow me. What's your name? I'm Victor, nice to meet you. Keep the secret... We have to do it at the same time. When I count three. Well. One, two, three!

VICTOR: Wait here.

(Victor approaches the lifeless body. He hits the creature's chest hard.)

VICTOR: You should be alive. YOU SHOULD BE ALIVE!

(Victor covers the monster with the sheets. Then he goes to the volunteer.)

VICTOR: Sorry. Thanks for your help. You can return to your seat. A big applause to...

(Victor stares at the audience with his back to the table where the monster is. Suddenly the monster slowly gets up.)

(The creature makes a strange noise, it does not know how to articulate words. Victor gets scared and at first smiles nervously.)

VICTOR: It works... It works!

(The creature becomes nervous and growls, approaching Victor.)

VICTOR: Easy, easy. Tell me. Who were you before you died?

(The creature snatches Victor's notebook and throws it away.)

VICTOR: No!

(The creature growls desperately and knocks some around in the lab, pushing Victor away.)

VICTOR: Take it easy! Please!

(The creature becomes even more aggressive and pushes Victor to the ground.)

VICTOR: You are a monster, you are not who I wanted. Get out of here, out of my sight.
You're not welcome. Monster from hell.

(The monster steps on his arm. Victor screams in pain. The monster notices and removes his foot.)

THE CREATURE: No! No! Alone!

VICTOR: Get out, get out, get out of here!

(Victor takes a cane from the laboratory and threatens him. The monster looks at him compassionately. Victor raises the stick even higher.)

VICTOR: Go!

(The monster gives up and leaves the stage.)

VICTOR: Don't ever come back.

(Victor lowers the cane slowly and then walks off stage. The lights fade.)

ACT III

MARY (OFF): *"The monster was hiding in the laboratory while everything continued as normal. We continued with our normal lives. For the first time, Henry and I agreed on the teachings. I didn't want to know anything about the occult and astrology, much less about raising the dead. We were happy times. Anyway, I had no idea that the worst was about to happen..."*

VICTOR: Please. Don't mess up my table. I have told you many times. Wilma, I advise you to review today's lessons.

WILMA: No problem, I'll finish my homework. Victor, I have a question.

VICTOR: About today's classes?

WILMA: No... What do you see through that glass?

(Wilma points to the audience.)

VICTOR: Nothing.

WILMA: Don't be mean, I can't see anything, but you can.

VICTOR: No, I'm serious. This window has opaque glass.

HENRY: Yes, my little one, he is right, we can't see anything.

WILMA: And why did you put an opaque glass?

VICTOR: To have more privacy. We cannot see what is outside and the people outside cannot see us.

WILMA: Ah! People who can see everything and yet create opaque crystals! Now I understand Plato's cave myth.

VICTOR: Sister. I love you.

(He hugs her.)

WILMA: Don't be silly.

VICTOR: See you, nuisance.

WILMA: Take care, Victor.

(Victor leaves.)

WILMA: Henry...

HENRY: Yes?

WILMA: Please, pass me the cane.

(Henry gives it to her.)

HENRY: Do you need anything else?

WILMA: Henry, What do you think is behind that glass?

HENRY: I don't know, the glass is not transparent.

WILMA: What little imagination you all have.

HENRY: I guess... curious people? Maybe a lot of eyes spying on our lives.

WILMA: Oh, my. Henry, you need to rest, dear.

HENRY: Great idea! Thank you!

(Henry kisses her and leaves. Wilma reviews the French language out loud. The creature slowly comes out from under the table.)

WILMA: *Le chien est... Le chien est un animal. Le triangle est une forme... une forme... forme géométrique. Formidable. Je suis très bon!*

THE CREATURE: New... Alone...

WILMA: Who are you?

THE CREATURE: New...

WILMA: Please, don't hurt me.

THE CREATURE: New student.

WILMA: Oh, forgive me. You are a new student.

- THE CREATURE:** Pardon this intrusion. I am a student. I have attended school classes almost every day from the window.
- WILMA:** Impossible... you couldn't see anything from that window.
- THE CREATURE:** But I've heard it all.
- WILMA:** My brother and my future husband are at home, and I am a simple student... Classes are over... Tomorrow we will resume classes. do you need anything else? Do you want some food?
- THE CREATURE:** Do not trouble yourself, my kind host; I have food.
- WILMA:** Because of your language, you are foreign. Are you from Switzerland?
- THE CREATURE:** No, I'm not from Switzerland. But I was born here.

(Wilma laughs nervously.)

- WILMA:** That doesn't make sense.
- THE CREATURE:** I am going to claim the protection of some people who I sincerely love, and who owe me a favour.
- WILMA:** Those people you mention... Are they from here?
- THE CREATURE:** They are from this house.
- WILMA:** What? You are wrong, this is the Frankensteins' house. The owner is my brother Victor.
- THE CREATURE:** Victor. Father.
- WILMA:** What are you saying?
- THE CREATURE:** But let us change the subject. I am an unfortunate and deserted the creature, I look around and I have no relation or friend upon earth. I am full of fears... I am alone.
- WILMA:** You are not a student. Please leave the house. Victor, Henry!
- THE CREATURE:** Please, no. Aunt.

(The creature takes her hand.)

- WILMA:** Aunt? What?...

(The creature raises her hand to its deformed face.)

- THE CREATURE:** Will you love your new nephew?
- WILMA:** Victor!
- THE CREATURE:** NO, NO, NO!

(The creature grabs her by the neck. She tries to remove her hand from the creature's face and in doing so the creature takes her engagement ring.)

WILMA: Please, let me go!

THE CREATURE: What's this?

WILMA: Keep it, but please go!

THE CREATURE: Victor rejected me and now I'm alone. Do you love me?

(The monster lifts Wilma's hand to his face again, but she rejects him with a scream.)

WILMA: No!

(The monster lets her go and places the ring in the girl's hands.)

THE CREATURE: He has made me miserable. I need someone just like me. I need a woman like me to do it.

WILMA: Who are you?

THE CREATURE: Victor mustn't know anything about my existence. He mustn't know that I am still alive and that I am here.

WILMA: Who are you?

THE CREATURE: A monster!

(The creature grabs the girl's neck.)

WILMA: Let me go, monster! You wish to eat me and tear me to pieces. You are an ogre. Let me go, or I will tell Victor...

THE CREATURE: You will never see Victor again; you must come with me.

WILMA: Hideous monster! Let me go. Victor punish you. You dare not keep me.

THE CREATURE: Frankenstein! You belong then to my enemy, to him towards whom I have sworn eternal revenge; you shall be my first victim.

(The monster leaves her lifeless. He places her out of scene, the ring rolls out of his hands. The creature takes the ring and puts it in Justine's work apron. The creature leaves.)

ACT IV

(The scene changes to Mary Shelley's room. The baby's crib is moving. She continues singing the song. Mary enters and goes to the baby. She hugs her in front of the audience and suddenly unfolds the blanket and there really is no baby.)

MARY: "Tommy was a piper's son, he learned to play when he was young, the only tune, that he could play"

(Mary leaves.)

P. SHELLEY (OFF): *Rose leaves, when the rose is dead. Are heaped for the beloved's bed. And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone... Love itself shall slumber on.*

MARY (OFF): "Victor knew who killed Wilma. But Victor remained silent."

(Victor stares blankly at the audience. Suddenly he pulls out a gun.)

VICTOR: You monster. You have murdered my sister, you have murdered my job...

(A shot sounds and the glass breaks.)

(Victor looks from side to side, seeking solace in the faces of the audience. He tries to tell the public that he cannot continue. During this scene, the two sides of the set have been closing, forming a "V". Henry enters and tries to calm Victor down.)

VICTOR: I can't continue... but... Who are you? And you? Why are you looking at me? What are you seeing? Do you think we are a circus? Mind your own business.

HENRY: Victor, What happened? What happened to the glass? Are you okay? Have you cut yourself?

VICTOR: I can't continue, I can't continue... Who are you?

HENRY: Who?

VICTOR: Who are these people? Don't you see?

(Henry hugs him.)

HENRY: Calm down. I am here. I am here. We already know who murdered Wilma.

(Victor pulls away abruptly.)

VICTOR: Have you found him?

HENRY: Her.

VICTOR: What?

HENRY: Her. The murderer is Justine.

VICTOR: But.

HENRY: We found the ring in her work apron.

(Henry shows Victor Justine's work apron. Behind the triangle on stage, Justine's back and head can be seen appearing in the background. She puts her head in a rope.)

VICTOR: But...

HENRY: Don't worry. She will pay for what she has done. Justine has been sentenced to hanging.

VICTOR: Hanging?

HENRY: Yes! The situation has been devastating, we loved Justine very much but the evidence is irrefutable. We can rest now, Victor. Everything is over.

VICTOR: No...

HENRY: Hey! Where are you?

VICTOR: I am here. I am fine. And... How are you? I'm sorry, Henry... about the wedding. Let me give you the wedding present.

(Henry looks sad for a moment and smiles.)

HENRY: What's that?

(Victor gives him the flamenco guitar carefully. He tries to play it.)

VICTOR: A year ago, Antonio Torres Jurado invented this strange instrument.

HENRY: I need to learn.

VICTOR: Everything is possible in this life, my friend.

(Victor hugs him.)

VICTOR: I have to tell you something.
HENRY: You can tell me what you need.
VICTOR: Do you remember when I locked myself in the laboratory and didn't want anyone to come in?
HENRY: Yes...

(A strange noise is heard. Victor looks alarmed to the side.)

VICTOR: Henry. Don't move from here.
HENRY: Where are you going?
VICTOR: Everything is going to be fine. I promise you.

(Victor reloads the gun by opening a box and some shells fall out.)

HENRY: Victor, you're scaring me. What are you doing?
VICTOR: Protecting us. Trust me. I'll tell you everything when I get back.

(Victor leaves to look for the monster. Henry looks in the box and takes out a jar with a brain inside.)

HENRY: But... What is this?

(On one side of the stage, the creature's hand appears. The monster slowly approaches Henry. Henry gets scared and drops a jar, but the monster catches it before it hits the ground.)

THE CREATURE: Maybe this brain will be my future wife.
HENRY: Who are you?
THE CREATURE: From today, I am your worst nightmare.

(The creature grabs Henry's head and knocks him dead. He sets him on the ground. Victor enters the scene.)

VICTOR: No!

(He shoots the monster. The creature falls to its knees on the ground while Victor helps Henry.)

VICTOR: No, Henry! No! No!

(He tries to revive him.)

VICTOR: Henry!

(Victor grabs a syringe from the lab and administers it to Henry.)

VICTOR: Please, stay with me.

(The monster gets up and goes towards Victor, who tries to defend himself by raising his weapon but the monster grabs his arm. The creature throws him to the ground. Victor raises the weapon little by little, fighting against the monster's strength.)

VICTOR: You are a monster and you deserve to die.

THE CREATURE: We had a deal. You had to create a woman for me. You owed me. I am your miserable creation, I have the devil in myself...

(Victor shoots and the monster falls to the ground.)

(Victor stays next to Henry as the set changes.)

ACT V

(The scene changes and the publishing house worker is in the chair. He is going books that have passed review and those that have not.)

R. WALTON: No... No... No... Mmm... The Vampyre, YES! a story by Lord Byron. Wait!

(A letter falls out of the book.)

R. WALTON: *"In the hearing of the publisher, I strongly request that this book be renamed after the author, John William Polidori, whose words were absolutely written by that person. Very truly yours, J. W. Polidori"*

(Walton starts laughing loudly.)

R. WALTON: Another deception with the authors. No... No... No... Mmm... Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus, YES! This is the best novel that has been written in years. Wait... by Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin... What? A woman?

(The door bell rings.)

R. WALTON: Come in!

MARY: Good afternoon! I am Mary. I would like to know if you have read my book and if it is possible to publish it.

R. WALTON: Mary?

MARY: Yes.

R. WALTON: Mary Godwin.

MARY: That's my name.

R. WALTON: Mary, you are a woman. It is impossible to publish your book.

MARY: If you don't think it's good enough, I'll go to another publisher.

(Mary tries to grab the book but Walton keeps it.)

R. WALTON: No publisher is going to want to publish a woman's book.

MARY: Give me my book.

R. WALTON: Let's do one thing. Your husband is Percy Shelley, right?

MARY: He is not my husband, we are not married.

R. WALTON: Let's say he's your partner... I suggest you publish this book in the name of Percy Shelley.

MARY: He is not the writer, I am the writer.

R. WALTON: Well, take it, no one will publish it.

(Mary thinks about it.)

MARY: Well... okay, publish the book.

MARY (OFF): My name is Mary Godwin. I lost my little daughter and started having visions of the baby. My lover, Percy Shelley, helped me and accompanied me throughout my life, until I wrote my first book, Frankenstein; or The Modern Prometheus. The book was published under Percy's name. Years later I married Percy Shelley and finally, I was credited with the authorship and my name was eventually added... My name is Mary Shelley, and I am the author of Frankenstein; or The Modern Prometheus.

THE END