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Greenstreet, Jessica Rene

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
SANTA CRUZ

FRAGMENTED PEOPLE: A PROMETHEUS EXPERIMENT

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
in

THEATER

by

Jessica Greenstreet

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The Thesis of Jessica Greenstreet is
approved:

Professor Patty Gallagher, Chair

Professor Michael Chemers

Professor James Bierman

Tyrus Miller, Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies

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ABSTRACT

Frankenstein: a Prometheus Experiment

By Jessica Greenstreet

This thesis tracks the process of the creation of the play *Frankenstein: A Prometheus Experiment* from theoretical groundwork to performance reflection. With inspiration drawn from Jeffery Cohen's "Monster Culture (7 Theses)", Alfred Jarry's Symbolism, and Richard Schechner's "6 Axioms of Environmental Theater", the piece is comprised of fragments of the work and life of *Frankenstein's* author, Mary Shelly. This thesis serves as a account of the artist's process and documents the theoretical and practical application of theory in the artists' work.

Fragmented People: A Prometheus Experiment

By: Jessica Greenstreet

Fragmented People: A Prometheus Experiment is a collection of enacted experiments in scene composition based on the novel *Frankenstein: A Modern Prometheus* by Mary Shelley. The scenes attempt to explore the relationship between the author's life and her work, as well as examine the effects of shifting the timeline of the novel to unearth similarities between characters. The piece also sets out to compare the development of the individual with the creation of the Creature through added, modern stories juxtaposed with the text of the novel. The script is composed of all found text from the following sources: the novel, the personal writings of Mary Shelley, and crowd sourced interviews.

In this paper, I will address and explain my inspiration for the piece through the different theoretical frameworks which are utilized in the creation of the script. Next, I will provide insight the process of the creation of the script by analyzing the intent and end with the execution of both the text and performance.

Methodology

This experiment in composition has developed much like the experiments of Victor Frankenstein in the novel that inspired it. Like Victor's monster, this project grew from an obsession sparked through education. Victor's obsession fixated him on the works of the alchemist Cornelius

Agrippa, while mine sprung from the discovery of the work and life of Mary Shelley. Once I read Frankenstein, my mind was bombarded with connection to other theories and ideas I encountered. New information, other works, and class assignments all found themselves commingling in my mind with the themes and imagery from the novel. My study in Cohen's Monster Theory, Schechner's 6 Axioms of Environmental Theater, and Alfred Jarry's Symbolist writings stood out especially.

I first encountered Jeffery Cohen's theory on monsters while observing a class taught by Michael Chemers, a UCSC professor in dramaturgy, theater theory, and monster studies. Cohen is a professor of English and the director of the Medieval and Early Modern Studies department at George Washington University. His "Monster Culture (7 Theses)" contains the framework and ideology of Monster Theory. This provoked my interest in the study of monsters as they relate to our societal fears and anxieties. I continued my monstrous education by taking a graduate seminar, taught by Chemers, on the topic in my fall term and acting as Chemers' teaching assistant for the undergraduate course in the same subject in winter. Cohen's work challenges individuals by providing a context for the analysis of the social function of fictional monsters. By analyzing the societal boundaries the monster crosses, the hybrid identity the monster embodies, and the fears and desires the monster evokes, we are better able to understand the society that popularized the monster. Our understanding and connection stems from our "fear of becoming" the monster through personal identification with it.

Cohen's third thesis, "The Monster is the Harbinger of Category Crisis", reflects the development of Frankenstein's Creature. Like Frankenstein's Creature, "the too precise laws of nature as set forth by science are gleefully violated in the freakish composition of the monster's body" (Cohen 6). This third thesis explains how monsters defy classification through being "disturbing hybrids whose externally incoherent bodies resist attempts to include them in any systematic structuration" (Cohen 6). Their bodies escape clear classification for they are a collection of different fragmented parts: the fears and anxieties of the time in which they are popular. With this lens, I was better able to understand Frankenstein's Creature by making observations concerning the society that birthed the monster, the era of Frankenstein's initial publication, while comparing it to the society that continues the popularity of the myth found in the present.

In addition to Cohen's theories, I found inspiration through the study of French playwright and pataphysician Alfred Jarry's deconstruction of classic Western theater through experimentation with form. I found this especially in Jarry's storytelling through the use of symbolism. After reading many of Jarry's works for a graduate class I took with playwright and theorist James Bierman on modern artists breaking the boundaries of classical western theater, I recognized the use of often seemingly unrelated symbols to deliver a cohesive thematic message rather than a plot driven narrative. Alfred Jarry's Symbolist writings provided a basis for a play type that changed the way the audience experienced the event of a performance. I found this

especially when I was researching "Caesar Anti Christ" by Alfred Jarry. In the second scene of "Caesar Anti Christ", a coat of arms is split into different characters, representative of the parts that make up a coat of arms. Together they are able to present a story, each with their own individual perspective from the character inlaid on to their inanimate form, and come together at the end as a whole coat of arms. The audience makes individual connections, based on their own experiences, between the symbols seen on stage and themselves. (Jarry)

Through James Bierman's class, I was also introduced to the theories of Richard Schechner found in his book "Environmental Theater". Schechner's focus is on the mechanics of theatrical events and how they relate to their text and performance. His theory is based in his "Six Axioms of Environmental Theater". The Axioms include discussion of theatrical events as a whole, but I became most interested in Schechner's fourth axiom "Focus is Flexible and variable". In the Fourth axiom, Schechner delves into the differences between what he calls "single focus" versus "multi focus" theater. Most classical theater experiences involve the use of single focus. Single focus is the effect of a scene in space having one point of focus for the action. Single focus also operates in the basis that there is one point in each scene that is the most important point to be in focus of and that there is a singular best vantage to experience the piece. Schechner then explains the concept and functionality of multi focus. He states: "In multi-focus, more than one event-several of the same kind -or mixed-media-happens simultaneously,

distributed throughout the space” (xxxvii). All of these events compete for the audiences’ attention and focus. No one audience member would be able to experience all of the events at the same time and they must choose which they turn their focus to, therefore each individual will experience a piece in their own way, based on what they choose to follow. Schechner compares this experience to “a kind of intellectual-sensory kaleidoscope” (xxxvii).

With these vastly different theories in mind, I set about to combine them for purposes of creating a composition that would put these theories into practice.

Concepts

My concepts for the experiment were all based in the theory that I have previously mentioned, for they inspired me put these theories into my own practice. Using *Frankenstein* as the basis for my experimentation, I was able to explore these different ideas all within the same mythic context. The workshop then became a laboratory to experiment with the connection of the text to Mary Shelley’s life, the timeline of the individual character’s arc, and the daily modern associations with the themes of the novel. For this experiment, I didn’t commit to one particular inclination, rather, I used the workshop to try them all, and see which concept would be most successful.

Frankenstein is the story of a young scientist, Victor Frankenstein, as he animates corpses to form a living Creature which he abandons upon its creation. The Creature learns language and the ways of the world by

observing a family through the chink in a hovel wall. The Creature confronts his creator, after he is run out of the village by the family he observed, and after he has murdered Victor's little brother, and asks him to build a female companion. Victor agrees, then goes back on their agreement. The Creature then kills Victor's childhood friend and his new wife, Elizabeth, on their wedding day. Following this mutual betrayal, the Creature then chases Victor for many years until they find themselves in the North Pole. Victor is then rescued by a sea captain named Walton, whom he befriends and tells his life story to. Walton records Victor's tale into a manuscript which he sends to his sister. The Creature finds Victor aboard the vessel, and Victor dies aboard Walton's ship.

Looking at this story through the lens of the theories I presented gave me inspiration to create a performance piece for purposes of exploring the novel and the practice these theories.

Using Cohen's Monster Theory, I was able to examine *Frankenstein* as a reflection of both the society from which it was born and the present. The era in which Shelley wrote was full of advancement, especially in the arenas of philosophy and natural sciences. These advancements were imperfect, and the gaps in understanding by the scientific community left gaps for monsters to invade societal consciousness; especially as they related to the study of cadavers and practice of childbirth. *Frankenstein* was able to play upon the anxiety surrounding the state of the body after death by exploring the reanimation of body parts to form a monster. For Shelley's audience,

there was an underlying fear that their bodies could be stolen for such a grotesque purposes. People had reason to fear that their bodies would be used for such experiments after their death. Legally, your body could be used for experimentation by the decree of the state in the case of criminal execution, or illegally, it could be stolen by grave robbers who could gain a pretty penny by selling bodies they reclaimed. This fear was so prevalent that “coffin collars”, a device used to seal coffins to prevent grave snatchers from exhuming a body, were widely sold. (Montillo 207-208). In addition to this fear, *Frankenstein* can be perceived as a depiction of the issues surrounding birth and parenthood. Mortality rates for mothers and children following childbirth were high, due to the lack of understanding by the medical community during Shelley’s time for “infections, mistakes, malnutrition, and lack of care before, during and after pregnancy, all resulted in a surprisingly high number of deaths” (Montillo 19) Birth and death were intertwined for in any birth, the life of the mother and child could be in great danger be. The fact that so many mothers and children died as a result of the birthing process begs the following questions: Is the creator responsible for the life of a creation, or if child that threatens the creator’s life, like the Creature threatens Victor’s life? In addition, is the creator responsible for their progeny at all cost to themselves?

I then decided to look closer into the work as a reflection of not only the era, but of the author. This caused me to compare the life of Mary Shelley to

her novel. I wanted to highlight the art that Shelley created as it reflection of her life.

Through the study of Mary Shelley's life and personal writings, I found that the lines between her existence and the characters in *Frankenstein* were blurred. Mary's personal experiences and interaction with friends and family filled the pages and points of view of the text. Specifically, I wanted to highlight the death of her child as a moment that sparked inspiration. Mary wanted to be a mother, a creator, and through the death of her child, the task was taken away from her. This in combination with the fact that Mary's mother was killed in childbirth made me look more closely into the parent-child relationship as it is represented in the stories of other characters. The list of dead or absent parents within the text is vast; Elizabeth's mother dies early in life, Victor's mother dies before he attends University, and the Creature doesn't find a father figure in the absence Frankenstein. I wanted to compare and contrast the accounts of these experiences.

Additionally, I was interested in giving more context to the author through describing the circumstances in which the novel was imagined and providing insight to the personality of the author. When researching the novel, I found I had put the mythic figure of Mary Shelley on a pedestal. All I knew of her was pieced together from the notoriety of her parents, the incredible story of Byron's writing competition, and from the book wrote that entranced me. Criticism on the novel mentioned how events in her life had been direct inspiration for her characters and situations, and pointed me in the direction of

Mary's published letters and journals. After reading the journal and letters, I realized she was just a person who was vastly human and had many faults. She wasn't the empowered, self-assured, independent woman I originally supposed her to be. The journal entries from the journey following Shelley's leaving her father's house to run away with Percy did not reflect the excitement and romance I thought they would contain. More accurately, the entries were full of complaints about the conditions of the journey including the complaining about money, lack of comfort and the people she encountered. The journal entries show also the tremulous relationship between Mary and her tag-along stepsister Claire. In these journal entries, I was also able to read Mary's personal account of the birth and death of her daughter. This tied together both the anxieties surrounding childbirth of the era with Mary's personal experience.

Cohen's theory helped me figure out why Frankenstein is important to today's audience. Monster Theory is not limited to the era we first see the monster, it also is able to help understand the time of the monster's reincarnation. Frankenstein's Creature is still popular to this day, the multiple and constant adaptations of the myth are proof of this, but we don't have the same issues of the society that birthed the original monster; we have new ones. These new anxieties include our search to balance the creation of individual identify, mixed with our anxieties surrounding acceptance of difference. The development of personal identify is monstrous for it reflects Cohen's third thesis, it is a hybrid created through fragments. The Creature of

the novel is a solitary outsider that is rejected by a compassionless society that only sees difference. The composition of his physical body and identity is unique; he is created from assembled cadavers, while humans are created by the union of our parents. On the other hand, parts of his makeup are relatable to others such as his relation to the natural world and understanding of communication. The “others” that could choose to relate to and embrace their similarities with the monster, isolate themselves by only perceiving and dwelling on the differences. This is something a modern audience can relate to for it is simply the story of a misunderstood outsider, trying to fit into a prejudice society.

What parts create our personal identity? This sparked my interest in following a concept of mixing a Frankenstein adaptation with documentary theater, allowing for the stories of real people to be put in conversation with novel. Documentary theater is the practice of creating art through the collection of stories from individuals on a specific topic from their point of view and using their experience as the basis for a work. I then collected stories from individuals based on objects that they found to be important to them. I chose stories based on objects because I imagined that just as the Creature in the novel was created of body parts from different people, people create their identity based on the things and moments in their life they feel define them. I wanted to make a play about the creation of human identity parallel to the creation of Frankenstein’s monster in order to unearth the anxieties people feel about being an outsider through the lens of the Creature’s

experience. One of my initial concepts for my piece included a collection of modern stories woven into the Creature's narrative as he describes in Volume II. As the Creature discovered objects through his development, I would juxtapose the discovery of modern objects that stories were based off of. The objects would start scattered about the space, and with each discovery, a human form would be made from the collection of them. I thought this could be possible by having a shelf in the shape a human being start off empty and be filled through the performance or the objects could be arranged so that as the pile became complete, a human form could be made from the shadow. This would illustrate that our stories and experiences make up who we are, and that makes us individuals.

Just as Cohen's theory made me aware of the fragmented composition of identity, I noticed that the fragmented nature of Jarry's Symbolist writings are very similar to that of *Frankenstein*. The novel is composed of fragments of writing by different characters including journal entries, letters and sections of work by other works. I had never read a novel composed from parts like this. While reading Shelley's text, I was constantly trying to find meaning and connection between the different pieces, just as an audience was intended to piece together the parts of Jarry's symbols. These interruptions and quick changes in speaker were jarring at first, and made the story difficult to follow. I then realized that these changes that I had first seen as jarring, caused me to look more closely at the text in order to decipher its' meaning and search for connections between the transitions. This forced me to ask myself why a

character in particular divulged a specific piece of information. I also questioned the inclusion of the poems and quotations. I discovered that the reading of letters made me consider the character writing the letter and their situation while writing it, while simultaneously making me consider the character to whom the letter was written. Many critics of *Frankenstein* focus on the lack of central motive, mirroring the sentiment that the novel, “is not “good” literature because it does not conform to criteria which require such texts to exhibit a unifying perspective” (Norman). I disagree. The fragmented nature of the text, as it unravels the intricacies of a vast amount of characters, each imbued with their own meaning, make the piece very much like a collection of parables. The text then serves as a collection of vignettes about life and morality. This inspired me to attempt to write a play that would reflect the fragmented nature of the text in the spirit of Symbolist writings. Although the pieces of the text were fragmented, the themes and connections the reader make makes when the story is mixed with their own perceptions and experiences are the key to understanding the novel. I wanted to bring a similar experience to a live audience.

In addition, I was forced to constantly consider the timeline of the story while I read for there was not a singular focus. *Frankenstein* caused readers to be “immersed in a succession of interdependent stories which interlink, supplement, and contradict each other” (Botting 4). The novel uses a nonlinear timeline with a set of nesting narrators. This frame work, often is described as a Chinese Box, with one contained story nested into another

(Newman). I became very interested in putting the story in a linear order and found that changing the order in which information is revealed to the audience affects the reading of it. By putting the timeline in order, we find that Victor is the main subject of the novel, until the Creature is born, where there is a split focus for their individual points of view, then Walton comes in to tie the two narrative together with the ending climax of the last confrontation of Victor and the Creature. Both of these observations inspired me to overlap the timelines for purposes of finding a connection between character arcs and the timing of the action.

I attempted to make a parallel of this structure by taking the individual parts that make up *Frankenstein*, the main characters, and having each a different experience in and point of view in the narrative to come together in each scene thematically. I knew the audience wouldn't be able to understand every part of each story line, using multi focus as a structural form, but I hoped, much like the coat of arms, that the overall picture would cause the audience to relate to the themes of each story. I drew inspiration from Schechner's "multi focus". I wanted to experiment with this concept as a playwright. Just as the fragmented nature of the novel *Frankenstein* does not have one clear, overarching narrative, I didn't want my adaptation to. Could I write a play written with multi-focus in mind, which would be a theatrical representation of the experience of reading the novel?

All of these ideas combined explained the title: "Fragmented People: A Prometheus Experiment". First the title parallels the title of the novel it is born

from “Frankenstein: a Modern Prometheus”. I broadened the scope of my project by focusing on the fragmented nature of the text of the novel, the composition of the text for the performance, and the varied theories I based my work in. I decided “Fragmented People” gave an idea of the lens through which I was looking at the text, and contemporary society’s development of identity. The people that are fragmented are the characters, who’s through whose arcs I attempted to find connection, and the people who fear their development of their identity has made them into a monster. These separate ideas were then thrown into the same workshop for development. Much like a scientist who uses the same Petri dish to test different specimens, my work combined in ways I didn’t expect, and forced me to observe the merits and drawbacks of each idea in contrast.

The Rehearsal and Performance of the Experiment

Rehearsal for the experiment ran as a collection of readings and exercises in scene compositions. After I began writing, I reached out to actors who will be willing to participate in this project. I told them that the rehearsal process would be aimed at work shopping the piece, which would culminate in a staged reading of the work in progress. I was able to bring together five committed actors to the project. The actors were not given the entirety of the script at the first reading, rather each rehearsal would be focused on a new scene which they would receive at the top. For the first couple of rehearsals, I

would assign parts, then we would read the script outright. I would then switch around the casting to hear the different takes on the same language. Then, following the advice of my mentor, actor and director Patty Gallagher, I separated my roles as adapter and director. As the director, I asked of my actors what I would ask questions like I would during table work (the time actors and directors analyze text before adding movement to the scene). These questions included the following: 1.) What is happening in the scene? What do you think this scene is about? What is your character's role in addressing this purpose? I then would ask more text specific questions such as: Are there any parts of the text that seem out of character? Did you find anything you read difficult to say or understand? The actors and I would then have a discussion where we went over the definitions of obscure words, the context of a line from where it was originally in the novel, and other dramaturgical notes or questions. Some of the actors had read *Frankenstein* before, some had not. This made discussion of clarifying the context interesting. For the people who had read the story, they were able to make connections between different scenes and characters than I had seen myself. The actors who hadn't read the novel were just as helpful. They were able to follow their individual character's intentions to see if they made sense in the scene, regardless of the context. These actors were also able to give me a fresh perspective, for I was deep in the rabbit hole of information about *Frankenstein* and it was difficult for me to see if something was unclear to those on the outside.

During and after this discussion, I would act as adapter and make edits to the text. We would then read the changed sections to see if the change was beneficial. If it was, I kept it. I often had my computer with a copy of the text in Google Documents, a program that allows a group of people to all edit the same document in real time, which was shared with my cast so that we could all see the same document on our different devices. This allowed for the actors to adjust the edits without delay.

After a few rehearsals, I permanently cast actors in the parts I wanted them to play. I made this decision based on the individual qualities of the actor, their strengths and their rehearsal availability. This allowed for the actors to become more intimate with and track the development of their characters. All of the actors were cast in multiple roles. Six actors played a total of eighteen roles. I did not want to have to multi cast as many roles as I did for I thought the transitions between some of the multicast parts would be confusing, but the decision was born from necessity for I was not able to find more actors able to join the project.

After the roles had been cast, I held both staging rehearsals, where we worked on blocking the movement of actors in the space, and one-on-one character building sessions. I was hesitant about blocking the actors with too much stage business. I took into account the time restraints and the fluid nature of the script. These factors would prevent actors from being able to learn intricate blocking in the amount of time before the showing. Also, due to the nature of a staged reading, the actors would need to read off of scripts in

their hands during the performance. This held back the actors from a full range of movement. To develop the blocking, I started with setting up the stage space.

Due to the lack of space availability, I knew my performance would have to take place in Studio C-100, one of our UC Santa Cruz Theater Arts Department rehearsal rooms. The room is a rectangular studio, painted black, with double doors at the entrance, two large windows, a vaulted ceiling, a built-in storage area for floor mats, and two properties cabinets. I started by exploring the space alone to imagine different possibilities of setting up the stage space. The mat storage is quite large, and often is sat upon, so I imagined that this area could be used for audience seating, but this space alone wouldn't be large enough for the audience I wanted to accommodate. Additionally, kept in mind Schechter's Multi-focus which would require a seating arrangement that would make sight lines, or the visual picture of the action, different for each audience member. This inspired me to set my space up as a theater in the round, with seating surrounding the perimeter of the room for it allowed for seats in the space and for each audience member's view of the action to be unique.

The furniture in the room consisted of a few wooden acting blocks, some chairs, and a large wooden form about six feet long and four feet wide with a slightly angled surface. I used these pieces of furniture to create different locations in the room that actors could use as a playing space. I put the form in the middle of the room. This form was used for many purposes

including Frankenstein's dissection table, Shelley's bed, and Walton's ship. Next, I identified that the cabinets used for properties lock up would hold the objects that serve as the subjects of the Modern Creature's monologues. I then set up four blocks on one side of the room, creating a space for Walton. Then, I fashioned two blocks together to make a desk which served as a base for the character of Mary. I then determined that a block inlaid in the audience seating would serve as another playing space. I distinguished these first so that my actors had landmarks for their blocking. Since the blocking needed to be minimal due to the nature of the staged reading process, I used the architectural spaces I created as a base for different characters and moments.

After setting up the stage space, I started blocking rehearsals. After discussing the scenes' content, I would give the actors a scenic shape to work with and challenge them to reach different check points at certain places in the text.

For example, in "Scene 7: William", I told the actor playing the creature to travel throughout the room, exploring the perimeter where the audience was seated, until they spotted William. I then told the actor playing Elizabeth to stay stationary in a place where she could be seen by the majority of the audience until the line "Last Thursday I and your two brothers, went to walk", when she would join William for a stroll around the room, closer to the center near the form. This made it so the creature was traveling in a large circle which surrounded Elizabeth and William. I then told the actor playing William

to go on a stroll throughout the room with Elizabeth, until after Elizabeth says, "...we prolonged our walk farther than usual", when they should break from Elizabeth and explore the form as if they were going off on their own in a forest.

I would give initial direction like this, then we would talk about what worked and what didn't work. I asked if people felt comfortable, or if they felt they needed to be in a different place. I would then clarify specific moments where actors had to interact with each other, such as the creature grabbing William's hand in the same scene, or had to be in a certain place by a certain time. We worked especially on simultaneous movement and mirroring action. The actors would then write the blocking in their script so that they could refer to it in both rehearsal and performance. Some actors found this less structured approach gave them more freedom, while others craved less open ended instructions. I was torn because I wanted to block all of the scenes completely, but time restraints prevented that from being a possibility for there would not be enough time to both give the scene very specific blocking and have that blocking be rehearsed enough for the actors to feel comfortable in performance. I stressed to them that they should imagine this as more of a movement exercise, where their movement and pace should vary based on their intentions and be informed by their language. We talked about following impulses and informing the language by illustrating the action described in the text whenever possible. Whenever action was implied by the language, I asked the actors to act out the action to the best of their ability, due to the

constraints as a result of holding a script. For example, during "Scene 3: Journey", the Creature, when the Creature says, "I thrust my hand into the live embers", I encouraged the actor to mime this action instead of just reading the script out right.

During our one-on-one character I would work with the actor to examine their individual character arc and how it relates to the rest of characters. Many of the scenes were overlapping monologues, so the text appeared to be split into different chunks as a dialogue would. In these sessions, I encouraged my actors to look at their text first as if it were monologue, ignoring all the other text in between their lines. I underlined that for their specific character, no time passes in between their speech. This was especially helpful in the understanding of Walton's letters. Walton's letters had the text widely spaced out within the scene, but by looking at the text without interruption, the actor was able to develop their ideas and form connections between the lines which would not have been possible without observing the text in this fashion. In addition to the previous exercise where the other character's text was omitted, I highlighted moments where the speech of different characters interacted in different ways. I wrote the text so that the speech of one character would often support, contradict, parallel, or be spoken in conjunction with another.

Sometimes, I combined the lines to be a continuation of the line before it. For example, in "Scene 3: Journey", the Creature discusses that fire can be used to both give warmth and cause pain with the line, " How strange the

same cause can have such opposite effects". This line serves a dual purpose by also becoming a response to Mary's relation of Jane's decision to stay with Percy and Mary. In this case, the "same cause" Jane's decision to continue, while the "opposite effects" are the positive reaction of Jane and the negative reaction by Mary.

Another example of a text used to contrast the thought of another character is found in the following two lines:

"Elizabeth: and our amusements would have been the labours of other children.

Creature: the children shrieked, and one woman fainted." (Scene 3: Journey)

This section is an example of how I picked out individual words and put them in contrast. The word "children" is found in both sentences, referring to the same general group of children which can be described as "normal children". Elizabeth and the Creature have very different perceptions of this particular group. For Elizabeth, the "children" are of a lower intelligence, or status, for they would rather be doing childish things than committing to their studies. For the Creature, the children are of higher status for they are of a status that can judge that the Creature as something monstrous for them to fear. After reading the novel multiple times, I found that Shelley uses similar words and phrases for the speech of her characters, which create interesting parallels. Using the electronic version of the novel found on Project Gutenberg, a website that provides full text versions of classic writings, I was able to use

the computer's search function to find exactly where word was used and to compare and contrast the particular passages. This was also helpful in finding correlations between the journal and the novel. I was able to search words in passages from the journal that I thought would be good additions to the scene and see if there were any large parallels in the text. This forces the audience to form connections between passages, even though the ideas in them could be contradictory, like Elizabeth and the Creature's experience with children. When ideas were contradictory, I encouraged actors to emphasize those differences so that the audience would experience the conflict in the different relationships the characters experienced to the same subject matter.

I recognized certain words and phrases made sense to be said by some or all of the characters simultaneously, even though the characters were not experiencing the same things. For example, the line, "I have never beheld something so utterly destroyed" was voiced by the Creature, Elizabeth, Mary and Victor in "Scene 3: Journey". Each used the same words to describe similar, yet individual experience. Victor and Elizabeth both voice the line in reflection of the observation of the tree getting hit by lightning, but Victor is expressing his glee upon seeing such a powerful natural occurrence while Elizabeth is speaking of seeing, in that moment, the destruction of the man she knew. Meanwhile, the Creature has just learned of the slaughter of Native Americans during the European takeover of the Americas, and he is reflecting on how genocide left the people utterly destroyed. Mary then reflects on the reading of the poem, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner", where

the subject of the poem was destroyed. I pushed the actors to express their character's individual point of view during these moments. I stressed that these lines should not be voiced as a chorus in unison, where the voices blend and one idea is being presented, rather it should be voiced as many different opinions and voices spoken simultaneously.

My rehearsal process with the Modern Creature was different than the rest. Although the actor doubled as other roles, Mary 2 and Victor's Mother, they were rarely called for rehearsal with the other actors. We read then discussed the original submission from the crowd sourced text. In some cases, the text was edited in order to shorten or clarify, but the content remained the same. We then would break the monologue into shifts in thoughts and intentions, also known as breaking the text down into beats. Following that, we would block the scene.

After the rehearsal process came the performance in front of an audience. I altered the design of the original space by writing with chalk on the walls. On one wall, I had written out the timeline of *Frankenstein*. I did this so that those who were not familiar with the story, would have something with which to anchor the experiments, especially scenes that played with different shifts in temporality. On the opposite wall, I wrote a timeline of the relevant events in Shelley's life from her birth to the second release of the novel. On the wall behind the blocks which made up Shelley's desk, I wrote Mary's name along with an ink pot and quill to symbolically represent a writing desk. On the wall behind the platform which served as Walton's base was drawn

the hull of a ship breaking through ice with Walton's name written over it. I wrote these characters names on the wall, for these actors were mostly blocked in these positions and I wanted to clarify who they were playing. The actors dressed in all in basic black, and were not costumed beyond that. To distinguish scenic transitions, I used an instrument that creates a noise that sounds like a storm called a thunder tube. To usher in and out the monologues of the Modern Creature, I used a wooden chime. Once the actors heard the first chime, they stopped their performance and found a place to observe the modern creature, out of their character. Once the chime signaled the end of the monologue they continued with their interrupted scene. Approximately forty audience members were in attendance. Over-fill seating was accommodated by seating individuals on the floor in front of the mat storage. I handed out programs that contained the following information: a list of who played which character, a list of scenes, an adapter's note and a questionnaire to act a review of the work. I encouraged people to take note of their reactions to the performance. During the performance, I recognized that the room, C-110, had acoustic problems that made it hard to hear. I didn't realize this as much in rehearsal because I was constantly looking at the script. Following the performance, I collected the questionnaires.

Reflection

Through analysis of my original intentions compared to my results, I can evaluate my work for the betterment of a future piece. Much like

Frankenstein's monster, my experiment acted in ways I didn't expect both in the application of theory and the mechanics of the performance.

First, I started with a context for putting together these related texts by bringing together themes, inspired by Jarry's Symbolist writings. As a character study, this was very beneficial for my understanding of the text. By going through the process of matching up these narratives and seeing where they intersect, I have a much better grasp on the novel, the author, and where the two intersect. This provided an invaluable base for future study in the subject. As for the application in the performance, I think the practice was less helpful in giving the audience to better understanding and perspective of *Frankenstein*. The exercise in textual composition was very intricate and particular, but in the production, these intricacies were lost and the scene as a whole lacked the clear understanding of coherent and overarching themes. Unlike the formation of Jarry's coat of arms forming at the end, there was no clear image or idea to serve as an umbrella for the scene to fall under. I didn't end up including my original idea of having the objects of the Modern Creature come together to create a human outline, which I now realize is essential to the understanding of that concept. Without the naming of the scenes in the program, I don't think it would be very clear what each scene was attempting to put forth. In addition, I realized that visual representation of Jarry's work was a major factor in the success of its practice. Unlike Jarry, I relied on my text to serve as the basis of information I gave to the audience.

This was a downfall for with the echo in the room and the plurality of the voice types, the fragments of text and character were difficult to distinguish.

This lack of distinction in the performance also effected the intent of experimenting with multi focus. Instead of forcing the audience to actively shift their focus from one unique point to another in space, they developed a soft focus while passingly observing a homogenous set of actors. The characters became undifferentiated both audibly and visibly. First, it was difficult to visually differentiate them. Because all of the actors where dressed in plain black, there were not visual cues to help separate the characters. I first thought that by dressing the actors in all black, it would help the transition of actors that would be playing different parts shift from one character to another where made. I thought the inclusions of changing costume would clutter transitions, but I did not take into account the benefit of representing each character individually. For the audience, it was difficult to determine when a change in character happened and which character the actor was portraying at any given time. In addition, all of the actors were on book, which limited their movement. Because the actors were hindered in this way, they were unable to make large choices that would distinguish them from the others. Auditory, voices to blurred together. This is due partly to the acoustics in the room being less than desirable. The other part is due to the similarities between cast members. Conducting this project on a college campus, I was able to bring actors into the project who were UC Santa Cruz students or recent grads, making them all relatively the same age, with the similar vocal

types and accents. On top of that, all but one of my actors was female bodied which caused the majority of them to speak in a similar pitch, making it difficult to distinguish one voice from another.

The idea inspired by Cohen's theory, the "Modern Creature Text", also fell short of being fully embodied. The stories were jarringly separate from the rest of the narrative due in part to the loud bell that rung at the beginning and ending of each piece. In addition, the language formed a complete contrast with the gothic language from the rest of the work. The separate rehearsal process for this piece had also siloed it from the rest of the work in my mind. We rarely rehearsed the modern creature monologues with the rest of the actors. This left little time for trial and error with the placement of these monologues as they were put into the script after the script was in its final draft before the reading. Finally, the concept was without a unifying element to be the ending culmination. It was as if the parts Frankenstein's Creature were assembled on the operating table, but never properly stitched together. Without an explanation of their inclusion through a connection with the story and culminating understanding,, the Modern Creature text was out of place and ineffective. By rehearsing separately, I separated the modern creature out of the play. I had placed the monologues in specific places for I didn't forge a connection in the rehearsal process, I rather relied on the audience to make passive associations.

Conclusion

Through the execution of these experiments in scene composition, I am better able to understand the possible applications of theory, the development of new works, and myself as an artist.

I learned the best way to understand theater theory is to put it in practice. Words on the page are only as helpful as their application on the stage. Theories are useful in informing the work, but the only measure of successful application of their practice is in the audience's experience. This educational opportunity was the only time to experiment with these ideas where the success can be measured by my experience as a creator.

Although I am proud of the work I accomplished, I learned that a refined product is the result of starting with clear goals and objectives. I plan on developing many more new works and this experience has taught me to not simplify my ideas, but to distill them. The clearer I can be with my initial ideas and concepts, the more centered and grounded my work will be. My experimental, shotgun, try-and-squeeze-everything-in approach was beneficial to me at this time as a study of theory I encountered, but this was a project in educational experimentation. This would not be a beneficial regular practice for the creation of performance centered on the audience experience.

In addition, this refinement is only possible when I can give a production the time and attention to make it so. A workshop is most helpful when the time is used effectively and pointedly. By attempting to write, edit, and direct the work in such a short period of time, I was not able to make the work as clear as it might have been. That being said, this more than anything

has made me realize the full scope of writing for theater. The seed of an idea to, a first draft, to a workshop, to a staged reading all the way through this reflection and the future incarnations are all valid and important parts of the writing process. Each step presents its own challenges that impact the final product. The production of the work is only one part of an individual writer's development. If I am not critical of myself during all stages of development, not just the reflection following the performance, my work will not improve.

Through my education at UC Santa Cruz I realize that, although the world of theater is a business that financially depends on the success of produced work, I don't want to be scared to experiment with new ideas. Only by exposing myself to new ideas and forms, will I be able to make my work innovative. This exercise has taught me that the reward of taking risks is a greater understanding of myself and my work.

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Fragmented People: A Prometheus Experiment

By: Jessica Greenstreet

Adapted From Frankenstein: A Modern Prometheus by Mary Shelley

Scene 1: Critics

Critic 3: There never was a wilder story imagined

Critic 1: In this case, the pleasure ordinarily derived from the marvelous incidents is secondary to that which we extract from observing how mortals like ourselves would be affected ...

Critic 2: This novel is a feeble imitation of one that was very popular in its day

Critic 3: it has an air of reality attached to it, by being connected with the favourite projects and passions of the times.

Critic 2: Our readers will guess from this summary, what a tissue of horrible and disgusting absurdity this work presents. –

Critic 4: We need scarcely say, that these volumes have neither principle, object, nor moral; the horror which abounds in them is too grotesque and *bizarre* ever to approach near the sublime,

Critic 1: the author opens a sort of account-current with the reader; drawing upon him,

Critic 3: The story begins at the end.

Critic 2: Walton, an enthusiastic traveler, bound on a voyage of discovery in the north seas, after having been for some time surrounded with ice, is astonished by the *appearance of a human being

Critic 1: *they encounter another human being. This last proves to be Frankenstein, the hero of the tale;

Critic 4: was in pursuit of a being that had passed the vessel on the preceding day. After a time Frankenstein contracts a friendship with Walton, the Captain of the vessel, and relates to him his supernatural story

Critic 1: In his youth he had been led by accident to study chemistry; and becoming deeply interested by the results of his experiments, he at length conceived the idea of its being possible to discover the principle of vital existence.

Critic 2: Taking this possibility as the leading point of his studies, he pursues them with such effect as at last actually to gain the power of endowing inanimate matter with life!!!

Critic 1: He instantly determines to put his newly acquired power into practice; and for this purpose collects the materials with which to form a living human being.

Critic 4: In short, after incredible pains and perseverance, he at length succeeded in producing a living human being, eight feet high, and of proportionate powers.

Critic 1: From this moment Frankenstein commences a life of unmixed and unceasing misery.

Critic 3: the moment Frankenstein has endowed with life the previously inanimate form of the being which he has made, he is so horror-struck with the hideousness of the form and features, when they are put in motion, that he remains fixed to the spot, while the gigantic monster *walks away*; and Frankenstein never hears any more of him for nearly two years.

Critic 1: The author supposes that his hero has the power of communicating *life* to dead matter: but what has the vital principle to do with *habits*, and actions which are dependent on the moral will? The whole detail of the development of the creature's mind and faculties is full of these monstrous inconsistencies.

Critic 2: If Frankenstein could have endowed his creature with the vital principle of a hundred or a thousand human beings, it would no more have

been able *to walk* without having previously acquired *the habit* of doing so, than it would be to talk, or to reason, or to judge

Critic 4: He does not pretend that he could endow it with *faculties* as well as life: and yet when it is about *a year old* we find it reading *Werter*, and *Plutarch* and *Volney*!

Critic 3: After the creature leaves Frankenstein, on the night of *its birth*, it wanders for sometime in the woods, and then takes up its residence in a kind of shed adjoining to a cottage, where it remains for many months without the knowledge of the inhabitants; and learns to talk and read thro' a chink in the wall! "

Critic 2: The self-education of the monster, considering the slender opportunities of acquiring knowledge that he possessed, we have already noticed as improbable and overstrained.

Critic 4: That he should have not only learned to speak, but to read, and, for aught we know, to write -- that he should have become acquainted with *Werther*, with *Plutarch's Lives*, and with *Paradise Lost*, by listening through a hole in a wall, seems as unlikely..

Critic 3: The being which he has formed becomes his torment, and that of everyone connected with him. He causes one by one the death of all Frankenstein's dearest connections; his brother, his friend, and lastly his wife--whom he murders on their wedding night.

Critic 1: The fiend then quits the country where he has committed these horrors; and Frankenstein, in despair, determines to pursue him until he shall either destroy him, or die by his hand.

Critic 4: The story ends shortly after what we have related in the beginning.

Critic 3: Frankenstein dies on board the vessel of Walton

Critic 1: and the fiend may, for anything we know to be the contrary, be wandering about upon the ice in the neighborhood of the North Pole to this day;

Critic 2: and when we did not hurry over the pages in disgust, we sometimes paused to laugh outright; and yet we suspect, that the diseased and wandering imagination, which has stepped out of all legitimate bounds, to frame these disjointed combinations and unnatural adventures, might be disciplined into something better

Critic 3: The real events of the world have, in our day, too, been of so wondrous and gigantic a kind,--the shiftings of the scenes in our stupendous drama have been so rapid and various, that Shakespeare himself, in his wildest flights, has been completely distanced by the eccentricities of actual existence

Critic 4: The dreams of insanity are embodied in the strong and striking language of the insane, and the author, notwithstanding the rationality of his preface, often leaves us in doubt whether he is not as mad as his hero.

Critic 2: We have heard that this work is written by Mr. Shelley; but should be disposed to attribute it to even a less experienced writer than he is. In fact we have some idea that it is the production of a daughter of a celebrated living novelist.

Critic 3: The very extravagance of the present production will now be in its favour, since the events which have actually passed before our eyes have made the atmosphere of miracles that in which we most readily breathe.

Critic 1: Our appetite ... for every sort of wonder and vehement interest has in this way become so desperately inflamed, that especially as the world around us has again settled into its old dull state of happiness and legitimacy, we even like a story the better that it is disjointed and irregular.

Mary 1/ Mary 2: Frankenstein: A Modern Prometheus by MARY Shelley

Critic 2: The writer of it is, we understand, a female; this is an aggravation of that which is the prevailing fault of the novel

Critic 1: but the work seems to have been written in great haste, and on a very crude and ill-digested plan;

Critic 3: But when we have thus admitted that Frankenstein has passages which appall the mind and make the flesh creep, we have given it all the praise (if praise it can be called) which we dare to bestow.

Critic 4: Our taste and our judgment alike revolt at this kind of writing, and the greater the ability with which it may be executed the worse it is – it inculcates no lesson of conduct, manners, or morality

Critic 1: it cannot mend, and will not even amuse its readers, unless their taste have been deplorably vitiate

Critic 3: after a struggle between laughter and loathing, in doubt whether the head or the heart of the author be the most diseased.

Critic 2: but if our authoress can forget the gentleness of her sex, it is no reason why we should; and we shall therefore dismiss the novel without further comment.

All Critics: How did you, then a young girl, come to think of, and to dilate upon, so very hideous of an idea?

Scene 2: Geneva

Mary: I am more than willing to comply, because I shall this give a general answer to the question, so frequently asked of me.

Byron: We will each write a ghost story

Mary: said Lord Byron; and his proposition was acceded to.

Mary 1 & 2: Everything must have a beginning

Mary 2: and that beginning must be linked to something that went before. T

Mary 1: Invention, it must be humbly admitted, does not consist in creating out of void, but out of chaos.

Mary 2: The Hindoos give the world an elephant to support it, but they make the elephant stand upon a tortoise.

Mary 1: It is not singular that, as the daughter of two persons of distinguished literary celebrity, I should very early in life have thought of writing. As a child I scribbled; and my favourite pastime, during the hours given me for recreation, was to "write stories." I busied myself *to think of a story,*

Mary 1&2: —a story to rival

Mary 1: those which had excited us to this task.

Mary 2: One which would speak to the mysterious fears of our nature, and
awaken thrilling horror

Mary 1: —one to make the reader dread to look round,

Mary 2: to curdle the blood,

Mary 1&2: and quicken the beatings of the heart.

Mary: If I did not accomplish these things, my ghost story would be unworthy
of its name.

Mary 1&2: When I placed my head on my pillow, I did not sleep,

Mary 1: nor could I be said to think.

Byron, Percy and Claire: *Have you thought of a story?*

Mary 1 & 2: I was asked each morning,

Mary 1: and each morning I was forced to reply with a mortifying

Mary 2: negative.

Mary 1: I thought and pondered—vainly. I felt that blank incapability of invention which is the greatest misery of authorship, when dull Nothing replies to our anxious invocations.

Mary 1 & 2: Many and long were the conversations between Lord Byron and Shelley.

Mary 2: They talked of

Mary 2 & Percy: The experiments of Darwin

Byron: Who preserved a piece of vermicelli in a glass case, till by some extraordinary means

Percy: it began to move with voluntary motion.

Byron: Not thus, after all,

Byron and Percy: would life be given.

Mary 2: Perhaps a corpse would be re-animated;

Percy: galvanism had given token of such things

Byron: perhaps the component parts of a creature might be manufactured,

Percy: brought together, and endued with vital warmth.

Mary 1 : Night waned upon this talk, and even the witching hour had gone by,
before we retired to rest.

Mary 1 &2: When I placed my head on my pillow, I did not sleep,

Mary 2: nor could I be said to think. I saw—with shut eyes, but acute mental vision, —I saw the pale student of unhallowed arts kneeling beside the thing he had put together. I saw the hideous phantasm of a man stretched out, and then, on the working of some powerful engine, show signs of life, and stir with an uneasy, half vital motion. His success would terrify the artist; he would rush away from his odious handiwork, horror-stricken. He would hope that, left to itself, the slight spark of life which he had communicated would fade; that this thing, which had received such imperfect animation, would subside

into dead matter; and he might sleep in the belief that the silence of the grave would quench forever the transient existence of the hideous corpse which he had looked upon as the cradle of life.

Mary 1: Frightful must it be; for supremely frightful would be the effect of any human Endeavour to mock the stupendous mechanism of the Creator of the world. I opened mine in terror... I could not so easily get rid of my hideous phantom; still it haunted me.

Mary 1&2: I must try to think of something else.

Mary 2: I recurred to my ghost story, my tiresome unlucky ghost story! O! if

Mary 1:O! I could only contrive one which would frighten my reader as I myself had been frightened that night.

Mary 1: Swift as light and as cheering was the idea that broke in upon me.

Mary 2: "I have found it! What terrified me will terrify others; and I need only describe the spectre which had haunted my midnight pillow."

Mary 1: On the morrow I announced that

Mary 1&2: I had *thought of a story*.

Mary 1: I began that day with the words,

Mary 1&2: It was on a dreary night of November...

Scene 3: Birth of the Creature

Creature: It was dark when I awoke. I saw

Victor: dull yellow eye of the creature open

Creature: Felt

Victor: his yellow skin scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries
beneath, His hair, lustrous black and flowing; his teeth pearly whiteness

Creature: Heard.

Victor: It became a thing such as Dante could not have conceived.

Creature: All at the same time.

Victor/ Creature: I Started from my sleep in horror

Victor: A cold dew covered my forehead

Creature: My teeth chattered

Victor/Creature: And every limb became convulsed.

Creature: By the dim yellow light of the moon* I beheld the wretch

Victor: *I beheld the miserable monster I created. *He held up the curtain of the bed and his eyes

Creature: *I held up the curtain of the bed and his eyes

Victor: If eyes they might be called

Victor/Creature: were fixed on me.

Victor: His jaw opened and

Creature: he muttered some inarticulate sounds.

Victor: He might have spoken, but I did not hear

Victor/Creature: One hand stretched out

Victor: Seemingly to detain me

Victor/ Creature: But I escaped

Scene 4: Journey

Mary: July 28, 1814 Percy- The night preceding this morning, all being decided- I ordered a chaise to be ready by 4 o'clock. I watched the lighting and the stars and became pale. I believed it not possible that we should succeed; still there lurked some danger even in certainty.

Walton: To Mrs.Saville, England. You will rejoice to hear that no disaster has accompanied the commencement of an enterprise which you have regarded with such evil forebodings.

Mary: I went. I saw her. She came to me.

Walton: I feel a cold northern breeze play upon my cheeks which braces my nerves, and fills me with delight. Do you understand this feeling?

Mary: The evening was most beautiful. There was a little wind- the sails flapped in the flagging breeze.

Walton: Inspired by this wind of promise, my day dreams become more fervent and vivid. I try in vain to be persuaded that the pole is the seat of frost and desolation; it ever presents itself to my imagination as the region of beauty and delight. There, Margaret, the sun is forever visible; its broad disk just skirting the horizon, and diffusing a perpetual splendor.

Mary: The morning broke, the lighting died away.

Victor/Creature: It was a dreary night of November

Victor: But I must not omit to record those events which led, by insensible steps to my after tale of misery: for when I would account to myself for the birth of that passion, which afterward ruled my destiny.

Creature: No distinct ideas occupied my mind; all was confused. By Degrees, I remember... The only object I could distinguish was the bright moon, and I fixed my eyes upon that with pleasure.

Mary: I said-- Mary look. The sun rises over France.

INSERT MODERN CREATURE: FLOWER

Walton: What may not be expected in a country of eternal light?

Victor: Our studies were never forced; and by some means we always had an end places in view,

Elizabeth: which excited us to ardour in the prosecution of them.

Creature: One day, when I was oppressed by cold, I found a fire which had been left and was overcome by the warmth I experienced from it. I thrust my hand into the live embers.

Mary: Saturday July 30, 1814. Jane informs us she is unable to withstand the pathos of Mrs. Godwin's appeal. I counseled her to take at least a half hour for deliberation. She returned to Mrs. Goodwin and informed her that she resolved to continue with us.

Creature: How strange that the same cause could produce such opposite effects!

Walton: You may remember that a history of all the voyages made for purposes of discovery composed the whole of our good Uncle Thomas's

library. My education was neglected, but I was passionately fond of reading. These volumes were my study day and night. It's been six years since I resolved on my present undertaking. I became a poet for one year and lived in a Paradise of my own creation. Twice I hired myself as an under mate in a Greenland whaler, and acquitted myself to admiration.

Victor: Our family was not scientific and my dreams were therefore undisturbed by reality.

Elizabeth: We learned Latin and English, that we might read the writings in those languages; and

Victor: so far from the study being made odious to us through punishment, we loved application-

Elizabeth: and our amusements would have been the labours of other children.

Creature: the children shrieked, and one of the women fainted. The whole village was roused; some fled, some attacked me.

Mary: Friday July 12, 1814 this village is entirely ruined by the Cossacs but we could hardly pity the people when we saw how unnamable they were.

Victor: I delighted in investigating the facts relative to the actual world. The world to me was a secret, which I desired to discover.

Creature: I escaped to the open country and fearfully took refuge in a low hovel, quite bare, and making a wretched appearance after the palaces I had beheld in the village.

Mary: The Cabaret we rested at was not equaled by any description I have heard of an Irish Cabin in filth and certainly the dirtiest Scottish Cottage I ever entered was exquisitely clean beside it.

Elizabeth: I busied myself in following the aerial creations of poets. To me, it was a vacancy which I sought to people with imaginations of my own.

Creature: I often spent the whole day searching in vain for a few acorns to assuage the pain of hunger. I longed to obtain food and shelter.

Victor: In this description of our domestic circle, I include Henry Clerval.

Victor and Elizabeth: We were never completely happy when Clerval was absent.

Mary: Jane was not able to sleep all night for the rats that as she said put their cold paws on her face. She however, rested on out bed

Elizabeth: Neither of us possessed the slightest pre-eminence over the other; but mutual affection engaged us all to comply with and obey the slightest desire of each other.

Mary: Her four footed enemies dared not evade perhaps having heard the threat that Shelley terrified the man with who said he would sleep with Jane.

INSERT MODERN CREATURE:DRESS*

Victor/ Creature: I now hasten to the more moving part of my story. I shall relate events that impressed me with feelings which, from what I had been, have made me what I am.

Creature: Through an almost imperceptible chink through which the eye could just penetrate, a small room was visible, whitewashed and clean but very bare of furniture. In one corner, near a small fire an old man played a sweet mournful air which I perceived drew tears from the eyes of his amiable companion, of which the old man took no notice, until she sobbed audibly; he then pronounced a few sounds, and the fair creature, leaving her work, knelt

at his feet. He raised her and smiled with such kindness and affection that I felt sensations of a peculiar and overpowering nature; they were a mixture of pain and pleasure, such as I had never before experienced, either from hunger or cold, warmth or food; and I withdrew from the window, unable to bear these emotions.

Mary: Wednesday August 1814. Shelley makes a bargain that night. Very kindly helped by a stupid bookseller.

Victor: I chanced for find a volume of the works of Cornelius Agrippa. A new light seemed to dawn upon my mind. I entered with the greatest diligence into the search for the philosopher's stone and the elixir of life.

Creature: It was on one of these days, when my cottagers periodically rested from labour—when someone tapped at the door. I soon perceived that although the stranger uttered articulate sounds and appeared to have a language of her own, she was neither understood by nor herself understood the cottagers. They made many signs which I did not comprehend, but I saw that her presence diffused gladness through the cottage, dispelling their sorrow as the sun dissipates the morning mists.

Mary: We stopped in Mettingen to dine, and there surveyed with ease the horrid and slimy faces of our companions in voyage.

Creature: By degrees I made a discovery of still greater moment. I found that these people possessed a method of communicating their experience and feelings to one another by articulate sounds. This was indeed a godlike science, and I ardently desired to become acquainted with it.

Mary: Our only wish was to absolutely annihilate such unclean sable animals to whom might have addressed the boatman's speech to the Pope.

Creature: By great application, however, and after having remained during the space of several revolutions of the moon in my hovel, I discovered the names that were given to some of the most familiar objects of discourse; I learned and applied the words, 'fire,' 'milk,' 'bread,' and 'wood.' I learned also the names of the cottagers themselves. The youth and his companion had each of them several names, but the old man had only one, which was 'father.' The girl was called 'sister' or 'Agatha,' and the youth 'Felix,' 'brother,' or 'son.' I cannot describe the delight I felt when I learned the ideas appropriated to each of these sounds and was able to pronounce them. I distinguished several other words without being able as yet to understand or apply them, such as 'good,' 'dearest,' 'unhappy.'

Mary: Mary: Sunday 4th 1814. We read Shakespeare-- our companions in voyage are tolerable-- we frightened from us one man who spoke English and whom we did not like by talking of cutting off King's heads.

Walton: I am imagined that I also might obtain a niche in the Temple where the names Homer and Shakespeare are consecrated. These are my enticements, and they are sufficient to conquer all fear of danger or death, and to induce me to commence this laborious voyage with the joy a child feels when he embarks in a little boat, on an expedition of discovery of his native river.

Creature: The days now passed as peaceably as before, Safie, the stranger, was always gay and happy; she and I improved rapidly in the knowledge of language, so that in two months I began to comprehend most of the words uttered by my protectors. My days were spent in close attention, that I might more speedily master the language. While I improved in speech, I also learned the science of letters as it was taught to the stranger, and this opened before me a wide field for wonder and delight.

Mary: Wednesday September 14th. London. Talk and Read newspapers

Elizabeth: When I was about fifteen years old, we had witnessed a most violent and terrible thunderstorm. It advanced from behind the mountains. As I

stood at the door, I beheld a stream of fire issue from an old and beautiful oak; and soon the dazzling light vanished. The catastrophe of this tree-

Victor: nothing remained but a blasted stump excited my extreme astonishment. Electricity!

Creature: The book from which Felix instructed Safie was Volney's Ruins of Empires. I should not have understood the purport of this book had not Felix, in reading it, given very minute explanations. I heard of the discovery of the American hemisphere and wept with Safie over the hapless fate of its original inhabitants. These wonderful narrations inspired me with strange feelings.

Thursday September 15, 1814. Hookham calls here and Shelley reads his Romance to him. He write to Voisay- reads the ancient Mariner to us

Elizabeth/Victor/ Creature/ Mary: I never beheld anything so utterly destroyed.

Creature: Was man, indeed, at once so powerful, so virtuous and magnificent, yet so vicious and base?

Victor: I constructed a small electrical machine, and exhibited a few experiments

Henry: He made also a kite, with a wire and string, which drew fluid from the clouds.

Elizabeth/ Victor: This last stroke completed the overthrow of Cornelius Agrippa

Creature: One night during my accustomed visit to the neighboring wood where I collected my own food and brought home firing for my protectors, I found on the ground a leathern portmanteau containing several articles of dress and some books. Paradise Lost, a volume of Plutarch's Lives, and the Sorrows of Werter.

Mary: Friday October 7, 1814. Percy: Jane was there. Her countenance was distorted unnaturally by horrible dismay. I informed her of Mary's pregnancy

Creature: The possession of these treasures gave me extreme delight; I now continually studied and exercised my mind upon these histories, whilst my friends were employed in their ordinary occupations. I can hardly describe to you the effect of these books. They produced in me an infinity of new images and feelings, that sometimes raised me to ecstasy, but more frequently sunk me into the lowest dejection.

Victor/ Creature: Of what a strange nature is knowledge!

INSERT MODERN CREATURE: Sticky Note*

Scene 5: Family

Mary: February 22, 1815. Percy. Mary is in labor and after a few additional pains, she is delivered of a female child.

Victor: It was on a dreary night of November.... But to examine the causes of life

Mary: The child is unexpectedly alive

Victor: We must first have recourse to death.

Mary: but still not expected to live.

Victor: My mother sickened.

Mary: February 24, 1815. Favorable symptoms in the child-- we may indulge some hopes.

Creature: As I read, I applied much personally to my own feelings and condition. I found myself similar yet at the same time strangely unlike to the beings concerning whom I read and to whose conversation I was a listener

Elizabeth: I had caught the scarlet fever; but my illness was not severe, and I quickly recovered. She had entered my chamber long before the danger of infection could pass.

Victor: On her death-bed the fortitude and benignity of this admirable woman did not desert her.

Creature: Other lessons were impressed upon me even more deeply. I heard of the difference of sexes, and the birth and growth of children, how the father doted on the smiles of the infant, and the lively sallies of the older child, how all the life and cares of the mother were wrapped up in the precious charge, how the mind of youth expanded and gained knowledge, of brother, sister, and all the various relationships which bind one human being to another in mutual bonds. My person was hideous and my stature gigantic.

Mary: Monday March 6, 1815. Found my baby dead.

Victor's Mother: "My children, my firmest hopes of future happiness were placed on the prospect of your union.

Creature: What did this mean?

Victor's Mother: This expectation will now be the consolation of your father.

Creature: Who was I?

Victor's Mother: Elizabeth, my love, you must supply my place to my younger children.

Creature: What was I?

Victor's Mother: I regret that I am taken from you; and, happy and beloved as I have been, is it not hard to quit you all?

Creature: Whence did I come?

Victor's Mother: But these are not thoughts befitting me.

Creature: What was my destination?

Victor's Mother: I will endeavour to resign myself cheerfully to death and will indulge a hope of meeting you in another world.

Creature: These questions continually recurred, but I was unable to solve them.

Mary: Alabaster.

Elizabeth: She died calmly.

Mary: And my heart ever gazes on the depth of thy deep mysteries. I have made my bed in charnels and coffins, where Black Death keeps track of the trophies won from thee. Hoping to still be the obstinate questioning of thee and thine, by forcing some lone ghost thy messenger, to render up the tale of what we are.

Creature: And what was I?

Victor/ Creature/ Mary: Of my creation and creator I was absolutely ignorant.

INSERT MODERN CREATURE: WOODEN BOX*

Victor: I need not describe the feelings of those whose dearest ties are rent by that most irreparable evil, the void that presents itself to the soul, and the despair that is exhibited on the countenance.

Victor/ Creature/Mary: When I looked around I saw and heard of none like me.

Elizabeth: It is so long before the mind can persuade itself that she whom we saw every day and whose very existence appeared a part of our own can have departed forever—that the brightness of a beloved eye can have been extinguished and the sound of a voice so familiar and dear to the ear can be hushed, never more to be heard.

Victor/ Creature: Was I

Creature: a monster

Victor: a blot upon the earth

Victor/ Creature: from which all fled and who all disowned?

Elizabeth: The time at length arrives when grief is rather an indulgence than a necessity; and the smile that plays upon the lips, although it may be deemed a sacrilege, is not banished.

Victor: My mother was dead.

Mary: Thursday March 9th. Still think about my little baby-- ti' hard for a mother to lose a child

Elizabeth: but we had still duties which we ought to perform; we must continue our course with the rest and learn to think ourselves fortunate

Creature: Accursed creator! Why did you form a monster so hideous that even YOU turned from me in disgust? God, in pity, made man beautiful and alluring, after his own image; but my form is a filthy type of yours, more horrid even from the very resemblance. Satan had his companions, fellow devils, to admire and encourage him, but I am solitary and abhorred.'

Mary: Monday March 13th, 1815. this is foolish I suppose, yet whenever I am left alone to my own thoughts and do not read to divert them. I always come back to the same point

Victor: When I had attained the age of seventeen, my parents resolved that I should become a student at the University of Ingolstadt.

Mary: That I was a mother and am so no longer.

Victor/ Creature/Elizabeth/Mary: I was now alone.

Walton: I do not intend to sail until the month of June; and when shall I return? Ah, dear sister, how can I answer this question? If I succeed, many, many months, perhaps years, will pass before you and I may meet. If I fail, you will see me again soon, or never. Farewell, my dear, excellent Margaret. Heaven shower down blessings on you, and save me, that I may again and again testify my gratitude for all your love and kindness. Your affectionate brother, R. Walton

INSERT MODERN CREATURE: KEYS*

Scene 6: Knowledge

Creature: One day, when the sun shone on the red leaves that strewed the ground and diffused cheerfulness, the old man, at his own desire, was left alone in the cottage. My heart beat quick; this was the hour and moment of trial, which would decide my hopes or realize my fears.

Mary: Reading List 1815

Victor: In the University whither I was going, I must form my own friends and be my own protector.

Mary: Posthumous Works

Victor: I delivered my letters of introduction, and paid a visit to some of the Principal professors

Mary: Sorrows of Werter

M.Krempe: Professor M. Krempe. Professor of Natural Philosophy (Reads letter/ resume)

Mary: Don Rodrick- by Southey

Victor: M. Krempe was a little squat man, with gruff voice and repulsive countenance.

Mary: Gibbons Decline and Fall

M.Krempe: Agrippa? Magnus? Paracelsus?

M.Krempe: Have you really spent your time studying such nonsense?

Victor: Every Minute

Mary: New Arabian Nights

M. Krempe: Every instant that you have wasted on those books is utterly and entirely lost. Agrippa. Good G-d! In what desert land have you lived where no one was kind enough to inform you that these *fancies* are a thousand years old and musty as they are ancient?

M.Krempe: My dear Sir, you must begin your studies entirely new!

Mary: Man as He Is

Victor: The teacher did not possess me in favour of his doctrine.

Mary: Fall of the Jesuits

M.Krempe: I intend to commence a course of lectures upon natural philosophy, and a fellow professor, Mr. Waldman, will lecture upon chemistry alternate days

Mary: Plurality of the Worlds

Creature: All was silent in and around the cottage; it was an excellent opportunity; yet, when I proceeded to execute my plan, my limbs failed me and I sank to the ground.

Mary: Hermsprong

Victor: I could not consent to go and hear that little conceited fellow deliver sentences out of a pulpit! Partly out of curiosity, and partly from idleness

Mary: Le diable boitex

Victor/ Creature: I knocked.

Mary: Rokeby

Waldman/ Old Man: Who is there? Come in.

Mary: Ovid's Metamorphoses in Latin

Victor/ Creature: Pardon this intrusion

Mary: Wordsworth's Poems

Victor: I went into the lecturing room

Mary: Spenser's Fairy Queen

Creature: I am a traveler in want of a little rest. You would greatly oblige me if you would allow me to remain a few minutes before the fire

Mary: Fox's History of James II

Mr.Waldman: The ancient teachers of this science promised impossibilities and performed nothing.

Mary:The Reflector

Old Man: I will try in what manner I can to relieve your wants, but, unfortunately, my children are from home, and as I am blind, I am afraid I shall find it difficult to procure food for you.

Mary: Wieland

Mr.Waldman: The modern masters promise very little; they know that metals cannot be transmuted and that the elixir of life is a chimera but these philosophers penetrate into the recesses of nature and show how she works in her hiding-places.

Mary: Don Carlos

Creature: Do not trouble yourself, my kind host; I have food; it is warmth and rest only that I need. I am full of fears, for if I fail there, I am an outcast in the world forever.

Mary: Rousseau's Confessions

Mr.Waldman: They have acquired new and almost unlimited powers; they can command the thunders of heaven, mimic the earthquake, and even mock the invisible world with its own shadows.

Mary: Esprilla's Letters from England

Old Man: Do not despair. To be friendless is indeed to be unfortunate, but the hearts of men, when unprejudiced by any obvious self-interest, are full of brotherly love and charity. Rely, therefore, on your hopes; and if these friends are good and amiable, do not despair.

Mary: Lenora- a poem

Victor: On the same day I paid Mr. Waldman a visit. (Hands him letter of introduction)

Mary: Life of Lady Hamilton

INSERT MODERN CREATURE: MONOPOLY PEICE*

Mr. Waldman: I little expected in this enlightened and scientific age to find a disciple of Agrippa.

Creature/ Victor: I have good dispositions; my life has been hitherto harmless and in some degree beneficial; but a fatal prejudice clouds their eyes

Mary: Caliph Vathek

Creature: Where they ought to see a feeling and kind friend, they behold only a detestable monster.

Mary: Kotzebue's account of his banishment to Siberia

Old Man: 'That is indeed unfortunate; but if you are really blameless, cannot you undeceive them?

Mary: Waverly

Mr. Waldman: If your application equals your ability, I have no doubt of your success.

Mary: Virgil

Creature: I am about to undertake that task; and it is on that account that I feel so many overwhelming terrors. At that moment I heard the steps of my younger protectors. I had not a moment to lose, but seizing the hand of the old man, I cried, 'Now is the time! Save and protect me! You and your family are the friends whom I seek. Do not you desert me in the hour of trial!'

Mary: Milton's speech on unlicensed printing

Mr. Waldman: Chemistry is that branch of natural philosophy in which the greatest improvements have been and may be made it is on that account that I have made it my peculiar study;

Mary: Curse of Kehama

Mr.Waldman: but at the same time if your wish is to become really a man of science and not merely a petty experimentalist, I should advise you to apply to every branch of natural philosophy.

Mary: Madoc

Creature: Who can describe their horror and consternation on beholding me?

Mary: Lives of Abelard and Heloise

Creature: Felix darted forward, and with supernatural force tore me from his father, to whose knees I clung, in a transport of fury, he dashed me to the ground and struck me violently with a stick.

Mary: The New Testament

Victor: He then took me into his laboratory, and explained to me the uses of his various machines

Mary: First volume System de la Nature

Creature: I could have torn him limb from limb, as the lion rends the antelope.

Mary: Chattertons Poems

Creature: But my heart sank within me as with bitter sickness, and I refrained.

Mary: Paradise Regained

Victor: He instructed me as to what I ought to procure, and promised me the use of his own, when I should have advanced enough in the science not to derange their mechanism.

Mary: Don Carlos

Creature: I saw him on the point of repeating his blow, when, overcome by pain and anguish, I quitted the cottage, and in the general tumult escaped unperceived to my hovel

Mary: Shakespeare's Play, Part of which Shelley reads aloud

Victor/ Creature: Thus ended a day memorable to me; it decided my future destiny.

Mary: Burke's account of civil society

Creature: Increase of knowledge only discovered to me more clearly what a wretched outcast I was.

Mary: Pope's Homer's Iliad

Victor: From this day natural philosophy, and particularly chemistry, in the most comprehensive sense of the term, became nearly my sole occupation.

Mary: Sallust, Micromegas

Victor: I attended the lectures and cultivated the acquaintance of the men of science of the university, and I found even in M. Krempe

Mary: Life of Chaucer

Victor: a great deal of sound sense and real information, combined, it is true, with a repulsive physiognomy and manners, but not on that account the less valuable.

Mary: Canterbury tales, Peruvian letters

Creature: Another circumstance strengthened and confirmed these feelings.

Mary: Voyages around the world

Creature: I discovered some papers in the pocket of the dress which I had taken from your laboratory.

Mary: Plutarch's Lives

Mr. Waldman: The labours of men of genius, however erroneously directed, scarcely ever fail in ultimately turning to the solid advantage of mankind.

Mary: Two volumes of Gibbon, Ormond,

Creature: Now that I was able to decipher the characters in which they were written, everything is related in them which bears reference to my accursed origin.

Mary: Hugh Trevor

Victor: If I could banish disease from the human frame and render a man invulnerable to any but a violent death?

Mary: Lewis Tales

Victor: What glory would attend the discovery!

Mary: Castle Udolpho

Creature: The whole detail of that series of disgusting circumstances which produced it is set in view; the minutest description of my odious and loathsome person is given, in language which painted your own horrors and rendered mine indelible. I sickened as I read.

Mary: Charles the Twelfth by Voltaire

Mr.Waldman: Yet with how many things are we upon the brink of becoming acquainted if cowardice or carelessness did not restrains our inquires.

Mary: Tales of the East

Walton: To Mrs. Saville, England. My dear Sister, I write a few lines in haste to say that I am safe—and well advanced on my voyage. How slowly the time passes here, encompassed as I am by frost and snow!

Mary: Labaume's History of the Russian War

Creature: I cherished hope, it is true, but it vanished when I beheld my person reflected in water or my shadow in the moonshine, even as that frail image and that inconstant shade.

Mary: Castle of Indolence

Victor: Remember, I am not recording the vision of a madman.

Mary: Coleridge's poems

Creature: I wished sometimes to shake off all thought and feeling, (It clings to the mind when it has once seized on it like a lichen on the rock) but I learned that there was but one means to overcome the sensation of pain, and that was death—a state which I feared yet did not understand.

Mary: Tale of Tub

Victor: In my education, my father had taken the greatest precautions that my mind should be impressed with no supernatural horrors.

Mary: Clarissa Harlowe

Creature: No father had watched my infant days, no mother had blessed me with smiles and caresses; or if they had, all my past life was now a blot, a blind vacancy in which I distinguished nothing.

Mary: Robertson's History of America

Victor: Now I was lead to examine the cause and progress of decay.

Mary: Nouvelle Heloise

Creature: I endeavored to crush these fears and to fortify myself for the trial which in a few months I resolved to undergo

Mary: 3 volumes of Barruel

Victor: I beheld the corruption of death succeed to the blooming cheek of life: I saw how the worm inherited the wonders of the eye and brain.

Mary: Fleetwood

Creature: Sometimes I allowed my thoughts, unchecked by reason, to ramble in the fields of Paradise, and dared to fancy amiable and lovely creatures

sympathizing with my feelings and cheering my gloom; their angelic countenances breathed smiles of consolation.

Mary: De l' Alemange

Victor: After days and nights of incredible labour and fatigue, I succeeded in discovering the cause of generation and life;

Mary: Emile

Creature: But it was all a dream; no Eve soothed my sorrows nor shared my thoughts;

Mary: Milton's Paradise Lost

Victor: Nay, more, I became myself capable of bestowing animation upon lifeless matter. I was surprised that among so many men of genius who had directed their inquiries towards the same science, that *I alone should

Creature:* I was alone. I remembered Adam's supplication to his Creator. But where was mine?

Mary: Lycidas

Victor: I doubted at first whether I should attempt the creation of a being like myself or one of simpler organization.

Mary: St. Leon

Walton: But I have one want which I have never yet been able to satisfy, and the absence of the object of which I now feel as a most severe evil, I have no friend, Margaret: when I am glowing with the enthusiasm of success, there will be none to participate my joy;

Mary: Lara, Peter Wilkins

Victor: A new species would bless me as its creator and source; many happy and excellent natures would owe their being to me.

Mary: Paradise Regained

Creature: He had abandoned me, and in the bitterness of my heart I cursed him.

Mary: Gibbons Life and Letters, 1st edition

Victor: No father could claim the gratitude of his child so completely as I should deserve theirs.

Mary: Corinna, La Bible Expliquee

Creature: And now, with the world before me,

Victor: Pursuing these reflections,

Creature: Whither should I bend my steps? I resolved to fly far from the scene of my misfortunes; but to me, hated and despised, every country must be equally horrible

Mary: Guy Mannering,

Victor: I thought that if I could bestow animation upon lifeless matter, I might in process of time (although I now found it impossible) renew life where death had apparently devoted the body to corruption.

Mary: Rinaldo Rinaldini

Creature: At length the thought of father, my creator; and to whom could I apply with more fitness than to him who had given me life? Papers had

mentioned Geneva as the name of his native town, and towards this place I resolved to proceed.

Mary: Life of the Phillips

Walton: if I am assailed by disappointment, no one will endeavour to sustain me in dejection. I desire the company of a man who could sympathize with me, whose eyes would reply to mine.

Mary: Emile

Victor: I saw the dull yellow eye of the creature open; it breathed hard, and a convulsive motion agitated its lips...

Mary: Excursion

Walton: Most affectionately yours: RW

Victor and Creature: All men hate the wretched; how, then, must I be hated, who am miserable beyond all living things!

Scene 7: William

Creature: Toils now drew near a close, and in two months from this time I reached the environs of Geneva. It was evening when I arrived-

Elizabeth: My dearest Victor,

Creature: I retired to a hiding-place among the fields that surround it to meditate in what manner I should apply to you.

Elizabeth: You have probably waited impatiently for a letter to fix the date of your return to us; and I was at first tempted to write only a few lines, merely mentioning the day on which I should expect you.

Creature: I was oppressed by fatigue and hunger and far too unhappy to enjoy the gentle breezes of evening or the prospect of the sun setting behind the stupendous mountains of Jura.

Elizabeth: But that would be a cruel kindness, and I dare not do it. What would be your surprise when you expected a happy and glad welcome, to behold, on the contrary, tears and wretchedness?

Creature: At this time a slight sleep relieved me from the pain of reflection, which was disturbed by the approach of a beautiful child, who came running into the recess I had chosen, with all the sportiveness of infancy.

Elizabeth: Last Thursday I and your two brothers went to walk.

Creature: Suddenly, as I gazed on him, an idea seized me that this little creature was unprejudiced and had lived too short a time to have imbibed a horror of deformity.

Elizabeth: The evening was warm and serene, and we prolonged our walk farther than usual.

Creature: If, therefore, I could seize him and educate him as my companion and friend, I should not be so desolate in this peopled earth. Urged by this impulse, I seized on the boy as he passed and drew him towards me.

Elizabeth: It was already dusk before we thought of returning; and then we discovered that William and Ernest, who had gone on before, were not to be found.

Creature: As soon as he beheld my form, he placed his hands before his eyes and uttered a shrill scream

Elizabeth: We accordingly rested on a seat until they should return.

Creature: I drew his hand forcibly from his face and said, 'Child, what is the meaning of this? I do not intend to hurt you; listen to me.'

William: Let me go monster! Ugly wretch! You wish to eat me and tear me to pieces. You are an ogre. Let me go, or I will tell my papa.

Creature: Boy, you will never see your father again; you must come with me.'

William: Hideous monster! Let me go. My papa is a syndic—he is M. Frankenstein—he will punish you. You dare not keep me.

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

Elizabeth: Presently Ernest came, and enquired if we had seen his brother; he said, that he had been playing with him, that William had run away to hide himself, and that he vainly sought for him, and afterwards waited for a long time, but that he did not return.

Creature: The child still struggled and loaded me with epithets which carried despair to my heart

Elizabeth: "This account rather alarmed us, and we continued to search for him until night fell, when I conjectured that he might have returned to the house. He was not there. We returned again, with torches; for I could not rest, when I thought that my sweet boy had lost himself, and was exposed to all the damps and dews of night.

Creature: I grasped his throat to silence him, and in a moment he lay dead at my feet.

Elizabeth: William is dead!—that sweet child, whose smiles delighted and warmed my heart, who was so gentle, yet so gay! Victor, he is murdered!

Creature: I gazed on my victim

Elizabeth: About five in the morning I discovered my lovely boy, whom the night before I had seen blooming and active in health, stretched on the grass livid and motionless; the print of the murder's finger was on his neck.

Creature: and my heart swelled with exultation and hellish triumph; clapping my hands, I exclaimed, 'I too can create desolation; my enemy is not invulnerable; this death will carry despair to him, and a thousand other miseries shall torment and destroy him.

Elizabeth: O God! I have murdered my darling child!

Creature: As I fixed my eyes on the child, I saw something glittering on his breast. I took it; it was a portrait of a most lovely woman.

Elizabeth: That same evening William had teased me to let him wear a very valuable miniature that I possessed of your mother.

Creature: In spite of my malignity, it softened and attracted me. For a few moments I gazed with delight on her dark eyes, fringed by deep lashes, and her lovely lips; but presently my rage returned; I remembered that I was forever deprived of the delights that such beautiful creatures could bestow and that she whose resemblance I contemplated would, in regarding me, have changed that air of divine benignity to one expressive of disgust and affright.

Elizabeth: This picture is gone, and was doubtless the temptation which urged the murderer to the deed. We have no trace of him at present, although our exertions to discover him are unremitting; but they will not restore my beloved William!

Victor: I gnashed my teeth, my eyes became inflamed.

Creature: Can you wonder that such thoughts transported me with rage?

Elizabeth: We are all unhappy; but will not that be an additional motive for you to return and be our comforter?

Victor: While I watched the tempest, so beautiful yet terrific. I perceived in the gloom a figure which stole from behind a clump of trees near me; I stood fixed: I could not be mistaken. A flash of lightning illuminated the object, and discovered its shape plainly to me; its gigantic stature, and the deformity of its aspect more hideous than belongs to humanity, instantly informed me that it was the wretch, the filthy daemon, to whom I had given life.

Elizabeth: Your dear mother! Alas, Victor! I now say, Thank God she did not live to witness the cruel, miserable death of her youngest darling!

Creature: I only wonder that at that moment-

Victor: Nothing in human shape could have destroyed the fair child.

Elizabeth: Come, Victor; not brooding thoughts of vengeance against the assassin,

Victor: HE was the murderer!

Creature: instead of venting my sensations in exclamations and agony, I did not rush among mankind and perish in the attempt to destroy them.

Victor: I could not doubt it. The mere presence of the idea was an irresistible proof of the fact.

Elizabeth: but with feelings of peace and gentleness that will heal

Creature: While I was overcome by these feelings, I left the spot where I had committed the murder, and seeking a more secluded hiding-place. A woman was sleeping on some straw; she was young, not indeed so beautiful as her whose portrait I held, but of an agreeable aspect and blooming in the loveliness of youth and health.

Elizabeth: instead of festering, the wounds of our minds.

Creature: The thought was madness; it stirred the fiend within me—not I, but she, shall suffer; the murder I have committed because I am forever robbed of all that she could give me, she shall atone.

Elizabeth: Enter the house of mourning, my friend, but with kindness and affection for those who love you, and not with hatred for your enemies.

Victor: I thought of pursuing the devil. Another flash discovered him to me hanging among the rocks. He soon reached the summit, and disappeared.

Creature: She moved again, and I fled.

Elizabeth: Your affectionate and afflicted Cousin, Elizabeth

Victor: I ardently wished to extinguish life I had so thoughtlessly bestowed.

Scene 7: Love

Mary: To Percy Shelley,

Elizabeth: To Victor Frankenstein. My dear Friend,

Mary: Dearest love-- I am so out of spirits.

Elizabeth: "It gave me the greatest pleasure to receive a letter from my uncle dated at Paris;

Mary: I feel so lonely, but we shall meet again tomorrow so I will try to be happy.

Elizabeth: you are no longer at a formidable distance, and I may hope to see you in less than a fortnight. My poor cousin, how much you must have suffered! I expect to see you looking even more ill than when you quitted Geneva.

Mary: I have received you letter tonight. How you reason and Philosophize about love--Mary: I have as great an opinion as you concerning its exaltedness and love very tenderly to prove my theory. Well so now I am to write a good night with the old story of I wish could say it to you

INSERT MODERN CREATURE: EARRINGS

Elizabeth: I would not disturb you at this period,

Mary: yes my love it has indeed become an old story, but I hope the last chapter is come-

Elizabeth: when so many misfortunes weigh upon you,

Mary: I shall meet you tomorrow love and if you do but get money love, which indeed you must, we will defy our enemies and our friends (for aught I see they are all as bad as one another), your own Mary who loves you so tenderly

Elizabeth: but a conversation that I had with my uncle previous to his departure renders some explanation necessary before we meet. You may possibly say, what can Elizabeth have to explain? I have often wished to express to you but have never had the courage to begin.

Mary: To Isabella Hoppner. My dear Mrs. Hoppner-

Elizabeth: You well know, Victor, that our union had been the favourite plan of your parents ever since our infancy. We were told this when young, and taught to look forward to it as an event that would certainly take place.

Mary: Pardon me that I do not write in French; you understand English well, and I am too much impressed to shackle myself in a foreign language. Even in my own, my thoughts far outrun my pen, so that I can hardly form the letters.

Elizabeth: We were affectionate playfellows during childhood, and, I believe, dear and valued friends to one another as we grew older. But as brother and sister often entertain a lively affection towards each other without desiring a more intimate union, may not such also be our case?

Mary: You were kind to us, and I shall never forget it. Now I require Justice.

Elizabeth: Tell me, dearest Victor. Answer me, I conjure you by our mutual happiness, with simple truth—do you not love another?

Mary: You knew Shelley! You saw his face and could you believe them? Believe only the testimony of a girl whom you despised?

Elizabeth: You have travelled; you have spent several years of your life at Ingolstadt; and I confess to you, my friend, that when I saw you last autumn so unhappy, flying to solitude from the society of every creature, I could not help supposing that you might regret our connection and believe yourself bound in honour to fulfill the wishes of your parents, although they opposed themselves to your inclinations.

Mary: She says that Claire was Shelley's mistress, that Upon my word, I solemnly assure you that I cannot write the words, I had rather die than copy anything so vilely false, so beyond all imagination fiendish.

Elizabeth: But this is false reasoning. I confess to you, my friend, that I love you and that in my airy dreams of futurity you have been my constant friend and companion.

Mary: I am perfectly convinced, in my own mind, that Shelley never had an improper connexion with Claire. The Malice of the girl is beyond all thought- I now do remember that Claire did keep her bed there for two days- but I attended on her.

Elizabeth: But it is your happiness I desire as well as my own when I declare to you that our marriage would render me eternally miserable unless it were the dictate of your own free choice. Even now I weep to think that, borne down as you are by the cruellest misfortunes, you may stifle, by the word 'honour,' all hope of that love and happiness which would alone restore you to yourself.

Mary: Claire had no child, the rest must be false. I will add that Claire has been separated from us for about a year. She lives with a respectable German family in Florence. That my beloved Shelley be so slandered in your minds-

Elizabeth: I, who have so disinterested affection for you, may increase your miseries tenfold by being an obstacle to your wishes. Ah! Victor, be assured that your cousin and playmate has too sincere a love for you not to be made miserable by this supposition.

Mary: It is all a lie- Claire, if anything, is timid. She always showed respect for me. Poor dear girl! She has some (many) faults, you know them as well as I, but her heart is good.

Mary: But I have said enough to convince you.

Elizabeth: Do not let this letter disturb you; do not answer tomorrow, or the next day, or even until you come, if it will give you pain.

Mary: Are not my words the words of truth? Repair the evil you have done by retracting your confidence in one so vile as Elise.

Elizabeth: Do not let this letter disturb you; do not answer tomorrow, or the next day, or even until you come, if it will give you pain. If I see but one smile on your lips when we meet, occasioned by this or any other exertion of mine, I shall need no other happiness.

Mary: Mary W. Shelley

Elizabeth: Elizabeth Lavenza

INSERT MODERN CREATURE: PIG*

Scene 8: Beginning

Walton: To Mrs. Saville, England. So strange an accident has happened to us, that I cannot forbear recording it. We watched the rapid progress of a traveler with our telescopes until he was lost among the ice. We were, as we believed, many hundred miles from any land; but this apparition seemed to denote that it was not, in reality, so distant as we had supposed. Shut in, however, by ice, it was impossible to follow his track. In the morning, however, as soon as it was light, I went upon deck and found all the sailors busy on one side of the vessel, apparently talking to someone in the sea.

Sailor: Here is our captain, and he will not allow you to perish on the open sea

Victor/ Creature: Before I come on board your vessel will you have the kindness to inform me whither you are bound?

Walton: Good God! Margaret, if you had seen the man your surprise would have been boundless. I never saw a man in so wretched a condition. By slow degrees he recovered. I never saw a more interesting creature: his eyes have generally an expression of wildness, and even madness, but there are moments when, if anyone performs an act of kindness towards him or does him any the most trifling service, his whole countenance is lighted up, as it

were, with a beam of benevolence and sweetness that I never saw equaled. But he is generally melancholy and despairing, and sometimes he gnashes his teeth, as if impatient of the weight of woes that oppresses him.

Sailors 1: Where are you from?

Sailor 2: What's your name?

Both Sailors: Why have you come so far upon the ice?

Victor/ Creature: To seek one who fled from me

Walton: And did the man whom you pursued travel in the same fashion?

Victor/ Creature: Yes

Another Sailor: Then I fancy we have seen him, for the day before we picked you up we saw some dogs drawing a sledge, with a man in it, across the ice.

Walton: A new spirit of life animated the decaying frame of the stranger. He manifested the greatest eagerness to be upon deck to watch for the sledge which had before appeared. (To Victor/Creature) Remain in the cabin. (To

Sailors) Someone should watch for him and give him instant notice if any new object should appear in sight.

Victor/ Creature: I have, doubtless, excited your curiosity. You may easily perceive, Captain Walton

Creature: That I have suffered great

Victor: unparalleled

Victor/Creature: misfortunes

Victor: I have determined, once, that the memory of these evils should die with me.

Walton: I said in one of my letters, my dear Margaret that I should find no friend on the wide ocean; yet I have found a man who, before his spirit had been broken by misery, I should have been happy to have possessed as the brother of my heart. He must have been a noble creature in his better days, being even now in wreck so attractive and amiable.

Creature: I do not know that the relations will be useful to you, yet if you are inclined,

Victor/Creature: Listen to my tale.

Mary: To Sir Walter Scott. Sir, having received from the publisher of Frankenstein this favorable notice

Walton: He then told me that he would commence his narrative the next day when I should be at leisure.

Mary: I hasten to return my acknowledgement and thanks.

Walton: This promise drew from me the warmest thanks. I have resolved every night, when I am not imperatively occupied by my duties, to record, as nearly as possible in his own words, what he has related during the day.

Mary: I am anxious to prevent your continuing in the mistake of supposing Mr. Shelley guilty of a juvenile attempt of mine

Walton: If I should be engaged, I will at least make notes.

Victor/ Creature: You seek for knowledge as I once did.

Walton: This manuscript will doubtless afford you the greatest pleasure; but to me, who know him, and who hear it from his own lips—with what interest and sympathy shall I read it in some future day!

Mary: Being written at an early age, I abstained from putting my name-- and from respect to those persons from whom I bear it.

Walton: Even now, as I commence my task, his full-toned voice swells in my ears; his lustrous eyes dwell on me with all their melancholy sweetness; I see his thin hand raised in animation, while the lineaments of his face are irradiated by the soul within. Strange and harrowing must be his story

Creature: It is with considerable difficulty I remember the original aera of my being...

Victor: You will hear of powers and occurrences, such as you have been accustomed to believe impossible...

Victor/ Creature: But do not doubt that my tale conveys the truth of the events of which it is composed.

Walton: Frightful the storm which embraced the gallant vessel on its course and wrecked it—thus!

Mary: I have therefore kept it concealed except from a few friends. I beg you will pardon the intrusion of this explanation

Victor/ Creature: It was on a dreary night of November...

Mary: Your Obligated, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley

END

MODERN CREATURE ADDITIONAL TEXT

Pig Stuffed Animal:

This is one of my best friends. He's been taken away from me by teachers, and honestly there was a long period of time where I refused to eat pork or ham because I didn't want to upset him.

I couldn't handle Toy Story 3.

I cried the whole movie.

Of course I was taking him to college with me (like that was even a question).

He's always been something I could come back to, something that offered me

comfort and safety, reminds me of times when I knew for sure I was happy. It's a really important thing, to me, not to forget what it's like to be a kid. Growing up isn't just like, "Oops, gotta be an adult now! Better donate all my toys!" To me, it makes more sense every so often to carefully reevaluate what's important to you and decide where to go from there. It's okay if the things that were important to you as a child aren't important to you anymore, but it's also okay if they ARE still important. You shouldn't have to justify it to anybody and I'm not going to.

Keys

This is the key to my last car, my first car ever. It was the car I grew up in, riding in the backseat with my sister while our parents drove us on road trips to Oregon, Nevada, Colorado once, SoCal. Everyone in the family learned to drive on that car, and then when I was 18 it was mine. This is going to sound insane, but that car meant to me than most people, more than any other car will mean to me ever again. It was my steel refuge n those really bad days, its backseat was the perfect place for picnics while it rained outside on good days, it was easily recognizable being a huge-ass maroon mini-van covered in bumper stickers and scratches and dents, it could hold all my friends when we went on road trips, and other times on lonely days I would just go. I'd take off with my van and just go somewhere, anywhere. I used to park at the top of parking garages and sit on the hood looking at the night sky and drawing in

my art notebook for hours. Being in that front seat was like getting a hug from a best friend every time I slid in. It was my best friend. It was a local legend in my hometown, for numerous reasons. Every person I've ever had sex with I've had sex with at least once in that backseat parked in a dark abandoned area with the stars shining through the back window. I named the car Sally. Sally died in the summer of 2013, 21 years old, almost 300,000 miles on her. I kept her in the parking lot of my building for months because I couldn't fucking bear to let her go. My car. My best friend. My protector. I'll never forget the day Pick-N-Pull finally came for her. We thought we heard the truck in the back of our building so we started to walk down the steps. I looked up through the windows facing the back parking lot as I started down the second flight of stairs and I saw the Pick-N-Pull truck with my Sally on the back. My heart stopped and I sprinted outside and to the car. My partner signed away the rights to Sally to the driver. I held her back bumper. And then she was gone. My biggest regret in my whole life, above every awful dumb thing I ever did and every horrible night I've had, was not spending one last night in the back seat of that van looking at the stars. So I held onto the car key. I wear it on a string like a necklace sometimes. She was the only machine of metal and oil and rubber that I've ever met that had a real live soul inside. I wonder sometimes if the Pick-N-Pull people noticed that on the inside of the van, on the ceiling where all my friends scribbled messages for years, they saw my scrawl I wrote at age 19 saying that I love Sally forever and always.

Sticky Note

I grew up in a single-parent household with a very, let's say "energetic" mother. She's an early bird. She gets up at, like 4, and is out by 9.

When I was a kid, I would wake up in the morning and she was nowhere to be found. She would always be in our very large garden with the wild deer, planting usually, or she would be in another part of the garden within the thick trees where our compost pile is. I formed a lot of anxiety about being left alone in the house after my Dad left abruptly when I woke up one morning (he came back into my life later but that's another story). So when I woke up and mom was in none of the rooms in the house, I would bawl my eyes out and cry down the street for my mom. She would usually reappear after about 5-10 minutes from up the garden or behind the trees to find me sobbing by the front door, not having heard me from the large shrubbery. After this happened many many times, no matter the reassurances that she would never leave me, we devised a way that she could communicate to me where she was when I woke up. Every morning, she wrote a sticky note and left it for me on the top of the kitchen counter. When I woke up, I would run downstairs, pull up a tall barstool and climb up it to read what the note said. It usually said something like "Compositing with the wiggly wormies, care to join?" or "Bring mama some juice when

you wake up please, all this digging makes me thirsty!" or "chopping firewood, no rest for the wicked!" and other silly things.

As I got older, it became more and more common that I would leave to school early in the day and come home when mom was asleep. The summers home from college were the same, with me waking up later in the day and coming home after midnight so that when I woke up she'd be gone and when I came home, she'd be fast asleep, day after day after day up until I left for college.

After I came back from college and moved back home with her, this pattern has continued. Last February, when I woke up around 10 am and she had left for work much earlier. On the counter, I found the croissant I had brought home with me the night before with a bite in it and note next to it with mom's handwriting that said: "Nice almond flour. Thank you for the bites". I know my mother well enough to know that she wanted to eat the pastry when she found it (we share everything pretty much) but she knew it was my pastry and didn't want it to be gone when I looked for it in case it was the only food I had before work. So, for breakfast, I took a few more bites and left the rest for her when she would get home. Next to the croissant I wrote: "We can share".

It's a weird thing to say but I felt like a full adult in that moment. It marked a shift from when my mom had been providing for me all of these years to a

time in the near future when I will be providing for her. In the end, I want her to know that she can always take what I have if it makes her happy because I love her and owe her more than I could ever give her.

MONOPOLY PIECE

My Grandpa was a man of many words and many talents. He was an entrepreneur and worked with big important companies and that had big important negotiations. Ever since I was a kid, my grandpa would play all kinds of games with me, but when I was eight, he deemed I was finally old enough to play Monopoly with him. I was so excited because no one would play it with me and I had been wanting to so badly. We set up the board. I choose the top hat, he chooses the car, and we start playing. The game was over almost as soon as it had started. He secured Broadway and Park Place while I was left trying to get hotels on the orange spaces. I looked at him with a stubborn chin that was only matched by his own, and said, "Gramps! Why didn't you let me win? All my babysitters let me win. I'm just a kid!" He laughed while he calmly started putting away the money into the box and said, "You know what? The world is never going to let you win, so why should I? You have to learn how to play the game to win it." The more I thought about, and think about it to this day, the more it makes sense. Out of all the

times we played, I never won once, but it didn't matter. Years later, I was babysitting and the little girl I was looking out for brought a set of magnetic fairy checkers to the table. She told me no one would play it with her. We set up the board. I didn't let her win. She looked at me with the same stubborn chin and asked what I had asked my grandpa those years before. I told her exactly what he told me. It only took her about 3 months to beat me. I guess some people are better at learning the game than others.

EARRINGS

Are they a natural pair, or aren't they?

The one on the right belonged to a pair I bought in a little boutique many years ago. These were my favorite earrings and I wore them constantly. Then I lost one, and I was crushed. I lamented this loss to my boyfriend at the time. I had left the orphan earring sitting on my dresser, and when that vanished too, I was puzzled and annoyed.

A couple months later, on my birthday, my boyfriend gave me a small box... and when I opened it, much to my amazement, I saw the earrings that you see in the photo: the orphan, and a very fair copy of it. Seeing how upset I was at losing my favorite earrings, he had nabbed the other one from my dresser so he could replace them. The boutique didn't have any more like it and he couldn't track down the original jeweler. So he took the earring to a bead store, got the matching pieces, and built the replacement earring

himself. It was a million times more precious to me than all those gorgeous blue Tiffany boxes of birthdays past. And it was part of what made me feel secure about the permanency of our relationship, because of course a guy who would go to this much effort for a silly little trifle, just to make his partner happy, was clearly committed to her well-being. But making jewelry (or shopping for it) is all fun, and as soon as real life started to get in the way of our fun -- as soon as he was faced with having to provide real emotional support rather than just trinkets -- he bailed. Our relationship, I eventually discovered, was like those earrings: a perfectly matched set by outward appearances, but on closer inspection, there's something a bit off about one of them. It turned out he was hopelessly narcissistic -- the earrings story was really more about making him look good than about doing a nice thing for someone else.

This story ends with my discovering he'd been having an affair (with someone he met through me, oh greatest of ironies) and lying to my face for months. I moved out of the house we shared -- left behind all the furniture I'd picked out, walls painted in my colors with my own hands -- and fled to a room of my own in this funny little beach town. I haven't worn those earrings since.

Wooden Box

This beautiful wooden box belonged to my father. When I was little, whenever my mom and dad were gone from the house, I would sneak into their room, go into their closet, pull out the drawers of their dresser, and climb up the pulled-out drawers like stairs. Once I had climbed to the top of the dresser, I would see this beautiful wooden box on top. To my six or seven-year-old eyes, this dresser seemed like a very tall—a tower in my own home, with a treasure box on top. Once at the top, perched on the shaky top drawer, I would admire the rich, swirling grain of the wood. Under the light of the closet's single bulb, the grain would seem to almost shimmer and undulate as I moved the box in my hand. The box opened like a jigsaw puzzle and had little shelves and compartments inside, which held a variety of beautiful little cufflinks. Some were thick and silver, with large, dark gems. Others were slim and gold, with little black etchings in them. The tiny silver ones with one tiny little diamond in the center were the ones he wore on his wedding. I was equally enchanted by the beautiful wooden box and by its contents.

When I was nine years old my father asked me to come talk to him in the living room. He was leaning back in his brown leather reclining chair. This is where he had always spent most of his time at home, and where he spent all of his time at home once his stomach cancer was such that he couldn't get up

or walk around much. He told me he wouldn't be around for much longer. He said,

"I know...it's a drag," with a trace of the ironical humor that permeated most of his utterances. He brought his indefatigable humor with him to the very end. He asked if there was anything of his I wanted once he was gone. I told him I would like the box with the cufflinks in it on top of his dresser. He asked me to bring it to him.

I pulled open the closet door and tugged the string attached to the light bulb. In the cozy incandescent glow, I heaved the heavy drawers open one last time, and began my ascent.

I brought the box to my father, and he told me how it opened up and had little compartments inside. He fiddled with the box for a while, trying to figure out how to open it. I took it and deftly did it for him. He chuckled.

"You're better at it than me."

He smiled. He didn't know just how familiar I was with his box until now, and the smile on his face showed me he was glad I had been enjoying it.

Flower

This is a place I've only visited twice in Santa Cruz, on campus and just off the trail of a bike path near the music center. When I first saw the view I was floored and suddenly humbled, in awe, and full of a quiet joy that I had been unfamiliar with lately. College is hard. Going to school without many close friends around is hard. Communicating with boys and being vulnerable is hard. Seeing this view, this incredible and vast picture of colors, gave me such perspective. I felt okay with the fact that I was spending time by myself, and that I do that a lot here. I felt okay admitting that solitude is sometimes a really beautiful and freeing thing. This is something I believe, and something I will try to remind myself. I want to always remember how warm the sunshine feels. I want to remember how real the beauty of this day is, and how soft and kind and full the wind makes me feel.

Elephant

Amanda Pierce was the most amazing woman I had ever met and then, one day, she died. I should be clear, she's still alive, but my 10-year-old self grieved her in an irrevocable way.

Amanda Pierce was my spiritual leader at our UU church. Admittedly, I'm an atheist, but a person needs to learn to trust and wonder and grow and Amanda Pierce fostered that in all of us. Every Sunday morning after service

we'd traipse into her cozy room and open up her big, black trunk of special objects. Out came rainbow candles and Buddhas, incense and prayer stones. We loved creating an alter each week while we shared our innermost thoughts with her. When you're 10, nothing ever ends. You live in such an expansive space of possibility that only beginnings truly make sense.

But one day all of that changed for me. Amanda Pierce sat us down and gifted each of us a very special treasure. From within tiny, multicolored sacks we drew forth beautiful, glossy elephants that stood on miniature pedestals. She explained something about their meaning in Buddhism and something else about inner peace, but all I really remember is that she truly loved us and this was goodbye.

After that, my childhood eyes never saw her again. Gone was the rotund, bespectacled woman of eternal calm and understanding who had soothed my tears and smiled at my tremendous energy. Chemotherapy had taken her and I did my best to celebrate her and lay her memory to rest. Some years later, I heard the glorious and unsettling news that she had survived chemotherapy with the help of alternative medicine. I didn't know what to do; one moment she was dead and the next she was alive and receiving visitors. She discontinued her work with the church, so several years passed before I sought her out. As peaceful and kind as ever, she was the spiritual woman I

remembered. But I had grown and that place in my heart had sealed.

Although I enjoyed catching up with her, the magic of 10-years-old had gone and with it the Amanda Pierce I once knew.

Dress

This dress shows how our relationship ended

The story: After she had broken up with me at a coffee shop. A relatively public place. I should have realized then, but we were walking down the street to meet the friend she brought with her. She asks me "Are you okay? I mean as much as you can be? Should I b-"

My walls are up.

"Well I mean you're going to be okay right?"

I had sensed this coming for a few days, and was numb. It happened 5 minutes ago, and now I'm being asked to let her in.

I shrug.

She Nods.

We stand there.

People walk by.

Then she asks again "What are you thinking?"

She's left me with little choice.

I open my mouth.

I can't be honest in the middle of the street. I can't just break down and tell her how I really feel.

I close my mouth.

I open my mouth again: "So when are you coming to get your stuff?"

I catch her off guard, just as she has caught me off guard.

She hadn't planned for anything except to cut and run.

She stops. I mean truly stops.

It's fear. I know this because when she starts moving again her eyes are wide, and she doesn't know what to say. She hadn't planned for anything except to cut and run. Run run run.

"Why don't you keep it? I don't need it"

In our own way, we both say, " I guess that's it. See you later"

But I don't think either of us really meant it.

All in all she left 8 pairs of panties, a snuggie, her crystal necklace, two pairs of decorated socks in 4 different patterns, a copy of *War of the Worlds*, a manga in a language I can't read, and this dress.

I feel it sums up our relationship because it's just sitting here, a discarded dress that nobody can use anymore, but I can't throw away either.

It's funny, but I always thought this was a different dress, a cocktail dress with large shoulders, but it isn't. I realize it's the dress she wore on our first date.