



*The
Dare*

1831 Briefing

Welcome to *The Dare*. You will play the five Romantic writers who stayed at Villa Diodati on Lake Geneva in Switzerland in 1816--which resulted in the ground-breaking novel *Frankenstein*. 1816 came to be known as the Year Without a Summer. Young, intellectual and brave (or stupid) they sought to throw off the chains of polite society: questioning the sanctity of marriage and embracing what they called "free love", rebelling against aristocratic privilege and hierarchal society (while benefiting from the wealth and freedom it accorded many of them) and championing equality for women (while living lives that undermined the choice and freedom of many of the women in this very circle).

There were two versions of *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus*, published. The first in 1818, was published anonymously with an introduction by Percy Bysshe Shelley. Many wrongly thought Percy Shelley was the author. This was published at the height of their Romantic aspirations--after Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley had married Percy and become Mary Shelley. Byron and Percy were alive and planning the publication of a magazine, *The Liberal*, to put forward socially liberal political ideals.

The second edition, with revisions by Mary Shelley was published in 1831, after the death of many of her children and her beloved husband Percy. *Frankenstein*, despite critical reservations, was an immediate popular success, adapted for the stage during Mary's lifetime. It has been presented in film, novel and every form media has to offer.

In playing this game, you will take on the roles of these writers, play out scenes from *Frankenstein* and enter someone's laudanum dream.

There are two versions of the game. This, the 1831 version focuses on the lives and relationships of the authors. By acting on their political principles (as well as baser urges) they made decisions this summer that irrevocably changed their lives. The creative collaboration laid the ground work for Mary to write *Frankenstein*, a work which was received to wide popular acclaim at the time, and which continues to have relevance in our world. The themes it addresses: life and birth, conquering death, love, alienation and companionship, technology and its ethical implications only become more important as time goes by.

First we'll have you work in small groups - the romantic couples and Polidori with the GMs, to choose what scenes will occur later in the game. You'll provide background on the characters to each other through a game of Whist. Then, we'll see the characters interact in Switzerland and we'll see the scenes of Mary Shelley's work intertwined with scenes from the lives of the authors. A Laudanum scene will mix the characters and their creations. Then We'll end with a brief Epilogue wrapping up each of their lives and legacies.

Scene structure:

Whist Introductory Warm-up

The Dare – Byron challenges everyone to write a ghost story

Writing Scenes: four scenes from *Frankenstein*, directed by Mary and the GMs

Interludes: John chooses scenes about the authors' lives, uses Meta-techniques with GMs

Laudanum Scene: Mary drinks Laudanum. She dreams of characters and friends

Epilogue: how each of their lives comes to an end



Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin (age 18), author of *Frankenstein*, Percy's lover
A brilliant, intense and quiet woman. Devoted lover and mother, wants to live up to legacy of her family.

Feminist author, known for her novel *Frankenstein: or, The Modern Prometheus*. Lover and mother of several children, with Romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley. Mary's father was writer William Godwin, who criticized aristocratic privilege and was an early proponent of anarchism. Her mother was Feminist writer Mary Wollstonecraft, author of *A Vindication of Women's Rights* which asserted equality. Mary and Percy, at the time of this game, have a 6 month old child William (called "Wilmouse"), though they are together un-wed, and fleeing England to avoid Percy's legal wife and his family's disapproval of their union. Mary and Percy embrace "free love", with Percy fathering children with both women, and possibly taking Mary's step-sister Claire as a lover. Mary Shelley espoused these values, but likely never took another lover. Died at the age of 53 of a brain tumor.

Percy: the love of her life

Byron: notorious figure, now friend & mentor

Claire: beloved sister and tagalong

John: a new friend, an untried artist

Percy Bysshe Shelley (age 26) Mary's lover



Unorthodox thinker, and prolific writer. Deeply emotional and impulsive. Commits to support his many lovers and beloveds financially.

Brilliant poet and thinker of his era. Met Mary and her family through seeking mentoring from William Godwin. Fell madly in love with Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin upon meeting her, threatening suicide if she did not return his love--despite his own marriage. Luckily, she did, and they embarked on a wild, idealistic, unconventional love affair that took Percy from his wife, and into the arms of other lovers including (possibly) Mary's step-sister, Claire Clairmont. Mary and Percy, at the time of this game, have a 6 month old child William (called "Wilmouse"), though they are together un-wed, and fleeing England to avoid Percy's legal wife and his family's disapproval of their union. Died in boating

accident in 1822.

Mary: the love of his life, among many lovers

Byron: notorious figure, now fast friend

Claire: such a close companion, not Mary's match

John: a young upstart, can he measure up?

Claire Clairmont (age 18, aka Mary Jane Godwin) Mary's step-sister and former lover of Byron



Beautiful and headstrong young woman. Grew up among great thinkers and yearns for recognition and acclaim.

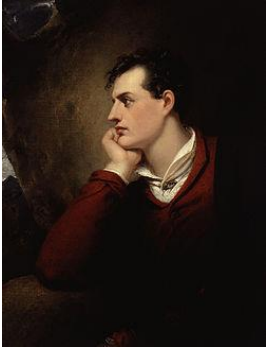
Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin's step-sister. Well-educated and raised in the same intellectual circles as Mary, Claire was fluent in five languages including French and Polish. Aspiring writer and sometime lover of Byron. Introduced Percy Shelley and Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin to Byron as inducement for him to allow her to stay with him. Pregnant during the Haunted Summer--to Byron's surprise! Carried his daughter Allegra, who was taken from her by the father. Came to regret the abuses of 'free love', and lost her child to illness in a convent where she was secluded by her father. Outlived all the rest of this party, supported in party by a pension from Percy Shelley.

Mary: my beloved sister, always outshining me

Byron: he will surely love me and our child

Percy: my beloved companion, so thoughtful

John: talented, takes good care of my Byron



George Gordon, Lord Byron (age 28), the host at Villa Diodati

Iconic rebel and outcast. Charismatic and brilliant. Fashionable, but self-conscious about his club foot. Devoted friend but can be patronizing.

Byron is a notorious poet and writer of the Victorian era. Born to wealth and a Baron's title but with an absent father and mother who struggled with mental illness, he grew up rejecting the standard values of society. A world traveler, sexual adventurer (with men and women) and political rebel, he was a leader in fashion and intellectual pursuits despite being rejected by the establishment and pursued by the law for debt. Byron became fast friends with Mary and Percy. Fathered child with Claire Clairmont despite their age difference and his relative indifference to her. Died in the Greek fight for independence.

Mary: a brilliant mind, fun to draw out

Percy: such a kindred spirit, he'll go far

Claire: keeps hanging onto our past love

John: a talented doctor, could he be a creative equal?



John William Polidori (age 20) Byron's physician and would-be protégé.

Advanced in studies for his age and hopeful of reaching heights in his career.

Received his doctorate of medicine at the exceptionally early age of 19, with a thesis on sleep-walking. Looking to be inspired and raised in status by his relationship with Byron. Intrigued by ideas of free love. He would become the uncle by marriage of poets Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Christina Rossetti--though they were born after his death of poison at the age of 26.

Mary: brilliant product of her family

Byron: my patron and model, such a life he lives

Percy: a dreamer and a radical

Claire: beautiful but so obsessed with Byron

Background

Romantic writers gather in Lake Geneva, Switzerland: Lord Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin (she would marry Shelley later that year), Claire Clairmont and John Polidori. It is 1816--the haunted summer when the sun barely shines and snow falls in June and July. People fear famine, with Europe still recovering from the end of the Napoleonic wars. The Romantics look to the realm of emotion for inspiration to make Great Art. These artists read ghost stories and embark on making their own creations--including *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley and *The Vampyre* by John Polidori.

In this game, players take the roles of these creators in their tangled emotional web, as well as the characters from their works of art. In dreams, the authors must face their own creations, as well as their own fears.

The Setting



Villa Diodati, on Lake Geneva

A mansion in Cologny, Switzerland rented by George Gordon Byron, or Lord Byron, in the summer of 1816 to escape scandals and debt in England. Formerly owned by the family of Charles Diodati (a close friend of the poet John Milton), it is in view of Lake Geneva. The game takes place in the parlor and private spaces of Villa Diodati. Also with them that summer are Mary and Percy's 6 month old child, several servants, five dogs, seven cats, a monkey and a peacock at the Villa.



Maison Chapuis.

House on Lake Geneva near Villa occupied by the Shelleys and Claire Clairmont during the haunted summer. Much more modest dwelling. During the events of the game, Wilmore (Mary and Percy's 6 month old son), is at Maison Chapuis with a nurse.

The War

With the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, the Napoleonic wars had just ended. These conflicts killed 1.7 million soldiers in France, nearly 2 million in Britain, Russia, Spain and others opposing the new French Empire, and countless civilians. This war changed the face of war in the world--countries fielded massive armies on a scale never seen before, casualties from disease and famine expanded the scope of war losses, and rising nationalism made these wars between peoples, not just rulers. It introduced the concept of Total War--targeting civilian infrastructure--which presaged the US Civil War and the World Wars of the early 20th century. The mood in Europe was joyful but shell-shocked.

Romanticism

A movement of the arts that focused on the individual, intuition and strong emotions. A reaction to the rational emphasis of the Neo-Classical thought of the Enlightenment Era. With a nostalgia for Medieval culture, raising it above the rationalism of science and philosophy from the Classical Greek and Roman periods. Also reacting to the modernization of society, and the heralds of the coming global industrialization.

Heroic individuals were thought to raise society up with them, and the spontaneous expression of emotion was prized, especially strong feelings such as horror and awe. Individual, original genius was seen as the be-all and end-all, with un-original work held in contempt. The mysterious workings of nature were idealized and seen as a refuge and source of inspiration. Sex and drugs were indulged in. Feverish images from laudanum induced dreams such as Percy Shelley's dream of Mary with eyes in her breasts, and hysterical fits such as Claire Clairmont's overwhelm on behalf of the character Cordelia when they read Shakespeare's play *King Lear*.

Poets and writers who embraced Romanticism such as Byron and the Shelleys, questioned social and political institutions of the monarchy, patriarchy and marriage. However, they and other thinkers from this era came from privilege of race and class, and often failed to question these inequities.

Free Love

Throwing off the institution of marriage to sanction sex and intimacy. Championed by Percy Bysshe Shelley, Lord Byron and embraced, at times, by Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin (Shelley) and Claire Clairmont. Byron had relationships with men and women, including those married. Exact relationships are unclear, but Percy Shelley continued his relationship with his legal wife, Harriet Westbrook, while living and travelling with Mary Godwin. His close relationship with Claire Clairmont indicates that they were lovers, though this was denied by Mary in her personal writings. Percy encouraged Mary to have relationships with others, but it is not clear that she did so. Clairmont in particular wrote bitterly about free love's excesses and blamed it for much pain in her life, such as losing custody of her daughter Allegra. Byron's life was a string of relationships--appropriately immortalized in his version of *Don Juan*, including--possibly--with his half-sister, that left a wreckage of scandal and hard feelings in his wake.

The Year without a Summer - 1816

Also known as the Poverty Year, low temperatures caused snow in June, loss of crops, famine and poverty throughout Europe and the world. Caused by the volcanic eruption of Mount Tambora in Indonesia, unseasonable cold shocked the world and caused panic and revolt. Europe, recovering from the losses of the Napoleonic Wars was doubly devastated.

Cast of *Frankenstein* – 1831 Version of *The Dare*

John Polidori player:

Victor Frankenstein – brilliant Doctor who conceives of plan to raise dead flesh back to life through the use of science

Claire Clairmont player:

The Creature/Adam – being crafted from the parts of dead humans and brought to life by Dr. Victor Frankenstein. Is rejected by his creator and humanity. Learns to speak and read by watching humans, and compares himself both to Adam and Satan in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Referred to as "The Creature" or as "Adam" in the scene script.

Percy Shelley player:

Elizabeth Lavenza – an orphaned child of landed nobility adopted by the Frankenstein family, raised with Victor and Justine. Supportive and admiring of Victor Frankenstein, eventually his becomes his fiancée.

William – young brother of Victor Frankenstein, arrogantly proud of his brother and his family name

Girl – a young girl who is saved from drowning in a river by the Creature of Frankenstein

Captain Walton – English captain of vessel in arctic seas who rescues the dying Victor Frankenstein

Lord Byron player:

Henry Clerval – fellow student and loyal best friend of Victor Frankenstein

Alphonse Frankenstein – very permissive and extremely rich father of Victor Frankenstein

Justine Moritz – child of one of the servants of the Frankenstein family, adopted and raised with Victor, taken back by the family as the Governess of William, youngest child of the family.

Magistrate – a local legal official who believes Victor Frankenstein's story of a rampaging creature

Various cast:

Villagers (all but player of Claire) – people encountered by the Creature (Adam), fear him

Family (all but player of Claire) – family watched over and helped by Adam, he comes to love them, they reject him cruelly

Elements of the world (various as needed) – trees, caves, river, etc.

COUPLE SCENES - 1831 VERSION

Look over the scenes relating to your characters. Choose two to play out in between scenes from *Frankenstein*.

Read through all the scenes and choose two to play out.

The player of John Polidori will work with GMs to choose when these are played, and use Meta-techniques to enrich scenes.

Play of Scenes:

- Players take the role of their main character. Other players or GMs play additional characters.
 - The GMs and John set the scene when this is played out.
 - Players can use dialogue during these scenes.
 - John can call for Inner Monologue, provide direction with Bird in Ear, or call for brief Flash-forwards or Flashbacks
 - The GMs will end the scene when the events described have taken place.
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Byron and Claire

1. Flashback

Byron meeting Claire in the presence of his wife Annabelle Byron - Byron is seductive and flirtatious with Claire and other women there. Claire is smitten and they sneak away for a dalliance

Cast:

Byron, Claire, Annabelle, Ladies of Society

2. Flashback

Claire translates for Percy and Mary on a trip through France - Traveling through the country following the end of the war. They encounter soldiers trying to find their way home. The soldiers threaten them for their food and money.

Cast:

Claire, Percy, Mary, Soldiers

3. Present (at Lake Geneva)

Claire telling Byron that she is pregnant with his child - Claire begins by trying to seduce him, Byron is cold and dismissive. Then she breaks the news.

Cast:

Claire, Byron

4. Present (at Lake Geneva)

Byron and Percy get the idea for forming their *Liberal* magazine - The whole group is together, talking late into the night. Percy and Byron discuss conservative English journals like Blackwood Magazine called the Romantic writers influenced by Byron the "Cockney School of Poetry." They get the idea to start their own, called *The Liberal*.

Cast:

Byron, Percy, Claire, Mary, John

Mary and Percy

1. Flashback

Courting by Mary Wollstonecraft's grave - Mary and Percy meet by her mother's grave talking of poetry, science and politics. Percy is overcome with feeling and begs for her love despite his marriage. He says he will die, or kill himself if he cannot be with her. Mary, of course, returns his love.

Cast:

Mary and Percy

2. Flashback

The death of Mary and Percy's first born child, Clara - Mary awakes in the night worrying about their prematurely born child. Percy comforts her. They discover together that the child has stopped breathing.

Cast:

Mary and Percy

3. Present (at Lake Geneva)

The group explores Free Love, with some failures - In the Villa Diodati, Percy leaves Mary's room to go join Claire down by the lake. John sees Percy and asks him if Mary is "free." Percy encourages him to approach her. Mary turns him down.

Cast:

Percy, Claire, John, Mary

4. Present (at Lake Geneva)

Percy and Byron are up early in the morning to go out hunting. Percy admits his fears of failure to Byron. Byron has faith in Percy and tells him so. John wakes first and joins them. The ladies wake, too and they all go out into the dawn together.

Cast:

Byron, Percy, John, Mary, Claire

<p style="text-align: center;">Bird-in-Ear</p> <p>Actions or emotions for a character, given as direction for play.</p> <p>For example, in a scene between Claire and Byron, when she tells him that the child is his, saying to Byron “how can you be sure it is yours?”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">META-TECHNIQUE</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Monologue</p> <p>Call for pause in play.</p> <p>Ask A player to tell character’s internal thoughts in response to events of play, or ask a question for them to answer.</p> <p>For example, Polidori is working on idea Byron gave him for The Vampyre, ask Percy “Why do you think Lord Ruthven has such resemblance to Byron?”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">META-TECHNIQUE</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Flashback</p> <p>Call for pause in play.</p> <p>Ask players to act out events from character’s past.</p> <p>For example, “show us how Percy told Mary she must love him or he would die, beside her mother’s grave.”</p> <p>Keep brief.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">META-TECHNIQUE</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Flash Forward</p> <p>Call for pause in play.</p> <p>Ask players to act out event from the future, either from history, or as characters may imagine things to occur.</p> <p>For example, asking Mary and Claire to play out happy moments from Claire and Mary’s (imaginary) shared wedding day with Percy and Byron.</p> <p>Or, have Mary play out learning that Percy’s ship has gone down, as occurred historically.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">META-TECHNIQUE</p>		

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN

This novel was begun in 1816, with a later revision in 1831. You'll direct the other players in scenes which they'll play out silently.

- Read through all the scenes and choose four to play out. Circle the numbers for those scenes.
- Each player has one or more characters assigned to them.
- With GM's help, describe where each scene is set and place players in relation to one another.
- Read the italicized text aloud. This is a quote from the work itself.
- Each scene is described in a series of sentences. Read each sentence aloud as directions for the player. Pause to give them time to act each out before going on to the next. Players mime actions, with no dialogue. GMs provide additional direction.
- Add details to the action. Feel free to tie in contemporary or period events.
- Begin the first scene with a monologue of how Mary got the idea to write this tale...

Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus

1. *"One of the phænomena which had peculiarly attracted my attention was the structure of the human frame, and, indeed, any animal endued with life. Whence, I often asked myself, did the principle of life proceed?"*

After the death of his mother, brilliant Dr. Victor Frankenstein devotes himself to his research-- attempting to find a way to bring dead matter back to life. He studies the human body and its structure by studying live humans. And due an upbringing by his father to have no fear of superstition and religion, he takes bodies of the dead from graves. These he dissects, learning and gathering parts for his great work. He has a breakthrough, crafting a giant body. He ignores the beauty of the world, his friends and even his beloved foster sister Elizabeth. Anxiety and obsession with the task grow in him. He believes only completing the task can make him feel well again.

Cast:

Victor, bodies, Father, friends, Elizabeth

2. *"No one can conceive the variety of feelings which bore me onwards, like a hurricane, in the first enthusiasm of success. Life and death appeared to me ideal bounds, which I should first break through, and pour a torrent of light into our dark world. A new species would bless me as its creator and source; many happy and excellent natures would owe their being to me."*

The creature is complete. Victor is successful and breaths life into it. It is glorious but terrifies him. Victor breaks into a panic, not sleeping the night after it comes to life. Victor sees a friend, Henry Clerval, is overcome with giddiness and collapses in a manic fit. Clerval takes care of him for a month while he recovers his wits and health. Victor returns to University with Clerval, forgetting his work and the creature.

Cast: Victor, the Creature/Adam, Henry Clerval

Notes on the novel: Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin had heard of Galvani's work with dissection and electricity to animate limbs. Even her mother's life may have contributed: she was "brought back to life" by onlookers knowledgeable in resuscitation after a second attempt at suicide by drowning.

First published anonymously in 1818 with an introduction by Percy, many erroneously thought it was written by Percy Shelley. The book was a popular success, but was dismissed by many critics, particularly once the true author's identity was known ("a feeble imitation of Godwin's novels" one critic called it). The novel was adapted for the stage during Mary's lifetime and has seen perennial revival in every

3. *"My own agitation and anguish was extreme during the whole trial. I believed in her innocence; I knew it. Could the dæmon, who had (I did not for a minute doubt) murdered my brother, also in his hellish sport have betrayed the innocent to death and ignominy?"*

Victor receives news that his youngest brother, William has been murdered while walking in the mountains. Their family friend and nanny, Justine Moritz has been accused. A valuable miniature brooch he was wearing was found in her things. Victor returns to for the trial. He is certain that it was his creature that killed the boy. Elizabeth testifies on behalf of Justine the court is still against her. Justine lies and confesses to the murder in order to obtain access to final absolution.

Cast:

Victor, William, the Creature/Adam, Jusine, Elizabeth

4. *“Do your duty towards me, and I will do mine towards you and the rest of mankind. If you will comply with my conditions, I will leave them and you at peace; but if you refuse, I will glut the maw of death, until it be satiated with the blood of your remaining friends.”*

After Justine is executed, Victor is wracked with guilt and Elizabeth is despondent. They take a trip through the mountains to cheer themselves, but the beauty of nature is no consolation. On a solitary walk, Victor encounters the creature. This is the first time they have spoken. He rails at it and says he wants to kill it. The creature says it will leave everyone in peace if Victor does as he bids.

Cast:

Victor, Justine, Elizabeth, mountains, the Creature/Adam

5. *“Like Adam [in Paradise Lost], I was created apparently united by no link to any other being in existence; but his state was far different from mine in every other respect. He had come forth from the hands of God a perfect creature, happy and prosperous, guarded by the especial care of his Creator... but I was wretched, helpless, and alone. Many times I considered Satan as the fitter emblem of my condition; for often, like him, when I viewed the bliss of my protectors, the bitter gall of envy rose within me.”*

The creature tells Victor of his life. Awaking alone and ignorant, he ran into the woods. Wherever he went, people were terrified of him. He found a hovel to inhabit for a year, nearby to a cottage. He watched the people there and grew to love them, doing good deeds like bringing firewood. They never saw him, but called him “Good Spirit.” From watching them he learned to speak and read--stealing some books, such as the *Sorrows of Werter* and *Paradise Lost*. He discovered he had Frankenstein’s journal and from it learned that his creator feared and hated him.

Cast:

The Creature/Adam, villagers, the Family (watched by Adam)

6. *“Can you wonder that such thoughts transported me with rage? I only wonder that at that moment, instead of venting my sensations in exclamations and agony, I did not rush among mankind, and perish in the attempt to destroy them.”*

One day he showed himself to the family he had helped, who attacked him and moved from their cottage from fear. Adam raged and despaired, leaving this shelter. In his travels, he saved a girl from drowning but was shot by her family. After healing from this injury, he came across William who called him an ogre and said who his brother was. Adam killed him in rage, stealing the locket and placing it on Justine when she was unaware. He became possessed of a passion to have someone to love him, a companion. And to do ill to his maker.

Cast:

the Creature/Adam, the Family, a girl, William, Justine

7. *“I will revenge my injuries: if I cannot inspire love, I will cause fear; and chiefly towards you my arch-enemy, because my creator, do I swear inextinguishable hatred. Have a care: I will work at your destruction, nor finish until I desolate your heart, so that you curse the hour of your birth.”*

Adam asks Victor to make him a mate. He swears hatred and vengeance on Victor if he refuses. And promises to go into exile, leaving humanity behind if he can just have a companion. Victor makes this promise but hesitates. He returns to his home and falls into illness and distress again. His Father suggests that he marry his foster-sister Elizabeth after he finishes his studies at University. Forgetting his promise to the creature, he goes. Leaving his family exposed and vulnerable, ashamed and not able to tell anyone what he has done. During this time he travels to Scotland and finds an island where he stays, and finally begins his work making a mate for the creature.

Cast:

the Creature/Adam, Victor, Victor’s Father, Elizabeth

8. *“Our lives will not be happy, but they will be harmless, and free from the misery I now feel. Oh! my creator, make me happy; let me feel gratitude towards you for one benefit! Let me see that I excite the sympathy of some existing thing; do not deny me my request!”*

The creature's mate is complete. Frankenstein contemplates what her life will be like. Will she love the creature? Will she turn from him to what he sees as the superior beauty of humanity? Will she do great evil, too? Adam finds him on his island. But when Frankenstein sees him, he is overcome with anger and fury and destroys the companion. Tears her body apart before his eyes. Adam rails in anger, begs and threatens Frankenstein to repair her. Frankenstein refuses and Adam vows to be there at Victor's wedding day. The creature departs and Victor sinks the remains of the companion in the ocean.

Cast:

Victor, the Companion, the Creature/Adam

9. *““Shall each man,” cried he, ‘find a wife for his bosom, and each beast have his mate, and I be alone?...Man, you may hate; but beware! Your hours will pass in dread and misery, and soon the bolt will fall which must ravish from you your happiness for ever.””*

Victor leaves the island and finds his friend Henry Clerval who came seeking him has been killed. Victor is accused of the crime. Again he knows it must be the creature. Victor loses his senses again, and is put in prison. His father free him from prison and travels home with him. Victor tells his father about the creature, but is not believed. Elizabeth sends a letter to release him from marriage--he has run away, she asks if he wants to marry her. He writes back to confirm their marriage and promises to tell her all the truth the day *after* they are married. They return home and he is reunited with Elizabeth. During their preparations for marriage, Victor grows paranoid and always carries weapons on him.

Cast:

Victor, Henry Clerval, Victor's Father, Elizabeth

10. *“My revenge is of no moment to you; yet,... I confess that it is the devouring and only passion of my soul. My rage is unspeakable, when I reflect that the murderer, whom I have turned loose upon society, still exists. You refuse my just demand: I have but one resource; and I devote myself, either in my life or death, to his destruction.”*

On their wedding day, Elizabeth and Victor go to an inn in the countryside together. While Victor checks the Inn, Adam enters Elizabeth's room and strangles her. Victor returns home to his family, and finally tells the truth about the creature to the Magistrate investigating the crime. He is finally believed, but enters a manic state of rage and vengeance.

Cast:

Elizabeth, Victor, the Creature/Adam, Magistrate

11. *“His soul is as hellish as his form, full of treachery and fiend-like malice. Hear him not; call on the names of William, Justine, Clerval, Elizabeth, my father, and of the wretched Victor, and thrust your sword into his heart. I will hover near, and direct the steel aright.”*

Victor pursues the creature across the countryside. Adam leaves messages scratched into bark or stone. They taunt or give directions for him to follow, or lead him to food. They travel north together, deeper into winter. Victor gets a dog sled. He catches up with the creature during a storm which breaks up the ice, killing many of his dogs.

Cast: Victor, locals, the Creature/Adam, the dogs

12. *“You have read this strange and terrific story,...and do you not feel your blood congealed with horror, like that which even now curdles mine?”*

Victor is rescued by Captain Walton of an English vessel. Victor is injured and ailing, but tells Walton the entire story. Victor comes close to death and asks Walton to continue his quest. Then, Victor dies and the creature appears on board. Adam claims the body of his maker, asking him to forgive him. He describes to Walton the agonies of hate and guilt he has felt as he did these murders. Adam says all is ended with Frankenstein's death. Adam says he will travel to the pole, see humans no more, and die alone.

Cast:

Victor, Captain Walton, the Creature/Adam

1831

Laudanum Scene:

John Polidori and Mary choose which characters will be in the dream, and which contemporaries of Mary. They may both take roles.

GMs - provide direction for each character in dream except the Dreamer. Create a fantastic environment and heighten themes that echo earlier scenes.

Play, the author drinks the Laudanum, then reclines.

Rises, is joined by character(s) from author's work. Something is odd about the environment.

Other authors enter and join the conversation.

GMs escalate the oddness of the environment to echo themes, and eventually to end dream.

Epilogues

1 - John Polidori - "I die in 1821 at the age of 25 of poisoning by cyanide. Due to my depression and problems with gambling debt, many think I took my own life. I leave behind no children. My time at Lake Geneva and *The Vampyre* is my lasting legacy."

2 - Percy Bysshe Shelley - "I die in 1822 at the age of 29, just two months after Byron and Claire's child Allegra died of Typhus. I drown sailing back in my boat the *Don Juan*, to Mary. Rumors circulate that the ship was defective, that I was suicidal, that I was assassinated for political reasons. Most likely I was taken by surprise by a sudden storm. I leave portions from my inheritance to Mary and to Claire, as well as my children."

3 - George Lord Byron - "I die of fever in 1824 at the age of 36. I sold my mansion in Scotland to help finance and fight for the Greek war of independence. I am fall ill just before a major assault I plan to lead, and am weakened by the treatment of bloodletting. I leave behind me a notorious reputation, and am the father of Ada Lovelace, who through her collaboration with Charles Babbage and his "analytical machine" is the first computer programmer."

4 - Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (née Godwin) - "I die in 1851 at the age of 53, most likely from a brain tumor. I am supported by my surviving son, Percy Florence Shelley and his loving wife. I had spent much of my life working as an editor. After my death they find in my belongings, locks of each of my children's hair, some of Percy Bysshe Shelley's ashes and part of his actual heart."

5 - Claire Clairmont - "I die in 1879 at the age of 80 of age and natural causes. Percy's support took long to reach me, but it did support me for many years. It devastated me when he died. I never forgave Byron for the death of our child Allegra. I remained in contact with Mary until her death, though our relationship was often strained. Though I scoffed at religion when I was younger, I embraced it and became a Catholic in my later years. I am often remembered with disdain, as competing with Mary or being lesser than the others. But in my private writings, I reveal that I suffered my whole life for the decisions I made while influenced by their ideals."

Queen



Byron breaks all the rules--he loves where he wills, travels the world, writes brilliantly. Surely he will inspire me.

I'm sure it's not true what they say about him falling in love with his half-sister...

John

King



This is my chance to cement my relationship with Byron. I've introduced him to Mary and Percy, my beloveds. He'll know soon about our child. I'm sure this summer will change my life for all time.

Claire

Jack



I thought being here with Byron would bring me new insights but all I'm getting is starved and trapped in a tangle of insane relationships. So-called 'free love,' but I am on the outside.

John - 2

2



My dear sister Mary. I've always been in her shadow. But now I am part of her family--her Percy loves me, too. I hope to find my own place in the spotlight here.

Claire

9



How did such an angel find me? Mary was raised in such an environment of learning--talking with such great minds. How romantic to woo her by the grave of her mother. And she understands the need for freedom--in our love and for the people.

Percy

8



Must Mary monopolize everything good in my life? Byron accepts me into his bed, but he doesn't listen to me as he does her.

Claire-2

6



I love listening to Percy and Byron talk long into the night, but the more I think about his history, can Byron be a good influence on my Percy?

Mary - 2

4



Percy is the light of my life, and the father of my dear child Willmose! I am so grieved still about the loss of our first child who did not survive. It's trying that Percy must deal with his debts, and his wife Harriet whom he left, but I'll never meet a more true equal in mind and spirit. Love transcends all the bonds that society lays upon us.

Mary

10



Percy has a brilliant political and creative mind, whose work is little known but I'm sure will grown in renown. I love him for his idealism and optimistic view that the world can change, but am skeptical that it can come into being in the world without real sacrifice and blood-shed. Exceptional men must fight for change, as did Napoleon.

Byron

Queen



What a promising young man John is, though it does seem that he's more enthralled with Byron than vice versa. Do I seem that way to Byron as well?

Percy

10



My dear half-sister, Mary Jane, now known as Claire. So beloved to myself and to Percy. She's been with us through so much in our travels through war devastated France. I hope her quest to be recognized by Byron--for him to accept the child she bears--will bring her happiness.

Mary

7



I'm not sure John belongs here after all. This young thing hangs on Byron's words but what does he have to say himself? His work seems derivative of Byron's. He has no insights of his own.

Percy - 2

Ace



Claire just won't let me alone, and now I learn that she's pregnant with my child. How can I turn her away? But I don't respect her.

Byron - 2

Jack



Claire is such a lovely, intelligent girl. She does seem obsessed with Byron, but perhaps time here will clear her mind. Could she be interested in me?

John

3



John is a handsome and charming addition to my household. He takes good care of my ills, keeps me comfortable and healthy. And at least he's here because of my reputation--not just to get into my bed, unlike Claire.

Byron

Queen



I imagine mother would have loved this place. I feel her spirit beside me, though she died at my birth. My life has changed so, from the quiet retreat of my books that I would read by her graveside. I believe she would approve of my choices, despite the disapproval of society, and even Father. She lived for the principle that a woman must have freedom to choose her own life.

Mary

Jack



I'm here fleeing mounting debts, and the scandal--not only of my many affairs with men and women--but that my wife Annabella is divorcing me. She thinks me insane and I've famously been called "mad, bad and dangerous to know."

Byron

9



Byron and I both face debt at home in England, but the true crime is the austerity being placed on the common people, paying debts owed by their governments after these terrible wars. They are right to join together to seek relief, and better terms from those who control the wealth.

Percy

7


I've just graduated from a prestigious medical college, one of the youngest to graduate from the program. I chose this assignment to bring me into this circle, and have access to Byron--one of the leading lights of our day.

John

King


This mansion I've rented near Lake Geneva has been called Villa Belle Reve--"the house of beautiful dreams." I've re-named it Villa Diodati after Charles Diodati, John Milton's dearest friend and creative colleague. Diodati's family owned this place and a plaque says Milton stayed here. We see Milton, born a century and a half before us, as one of our models for poetic achievement and fame for the ages.

Byron

Jack


England is going through so many changes. The slave trade has been abolished, but not slavery itself. Inclosure acts have pushed small farmers off the land and lost people their livelihoods. They now go to work in factories, but many fear factory machines will steal their jobs--so some workers destroy them.

Mary

10


All my life I've been surrounded by thinkers, writers, political radicals. This is the society I've been made for. Writing, indulging in love and talk with my equals. This is my opportunity to prove myself.

Claire

10


Switzerland is a refuge and a model. Here amidst the heights of the Alps, they've created a democratic state that rejects the leadership of the monarchy. My own country, Italy, is divided--controlled by Austria in the north, and the Hapsburg kings in the south. What if Percy's ideas about liberalism could come true there?

John

9


What a contrast the peace and beauty of this landscape are to the devastation and loss of life Mary, Percy, and I saw in France. I spoke to mothers who lost their children, as I translated for our group. Nearly two million French lost their lives for Napoleon. 800,000 from Russia, half a million from Spain..the loss of all those souls, snuffed out, and for what?

Claire

Ace



We'll have to speak with the servants, and the other men from the village to be sure that our homes are secure. I've heard of thefts and break-ins for food as the crops come up short in this summer-turned winter.

Byron - 2

8



People in the countryside are leaving their homes in search of food. Many have come to our door begging. They are refugees from the climate, just as those we met in France who lost their homes in the war.

Mary - 2

6



Disease is rising. I've been called on by local doctors to help treat people with Typhoid fever. It's spreading again, as it did in the war.

John - 2

5



Darkness of storms persists through the days. I'm going mad from being confined to the house by this weather. Lake Geneva is rising. At times I feel I can hear it lapping at our door.

Claire-2

Queen



What a dangerous but glorious climb we had to Lake Geneva in the midst of that wild storm. I'll never forget the massive lightning storm over the lake. The unchecked beauty of nature is like the human spirit.

Percy

3



The price of food has spiked. It's making it difficult for me to feed our household. But beyond ourselves, we should urge the government to support farmers in this time of crisis.

Percy - 2

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John - 2

Ghost Stories from

Tales of the Dead

The Spectre Barber

He was just going off to sleep again, when he fancied he heard a distant door grinding on its hinges, and then shut with a heavy noise. In an instant the idea of a ghost approaching caused him no little fear...

In stalked a tall thin figure with a black beard, whose appearance was indicative of chagrin and melancholy...No powers are adequate to describe the agonies Francis endured: he recommended himself to the Virgin Mary, and endeavoured, as well as his fears would permit, to form an idea of the spectre's designs on him...

Three times three with slow and measured steps he walked round the room, examined the consecrated candles, and snuffed them: he then threw off his cloak, unfolded a shaving apparatus, and took from it the razors, which he sharpened on a large leather strop hanging to his belt.

A cold perspiration came over Francis, when the spectre with a grave air, made signs for him to sit in the barbers chair.

The Family Portraits

It was an ancient edifice, and had descended through a long line of ancestry to Juliana's father; for which he was only anxious to preserve it in the same state they had left it to him.

Among the number of antiquities most prized by him was the family picture gallery; a vaulted room dark, high, and of gothic architecture, where hung the portraits of his forefathers, as large as the natural size, covering the walls which were blackened by age...Among the portraits there was one of a female, who, it would seem did not belong to the family.

Juliana never looked at this portrait without an involuntary shuddering: and she has told me that from her earliest infancy she has felt this secret terror, without being able to define the cause. Her father treated this sentiment as childish and puerile, and compelled her sometimes to remain alone in that room. But as Juliana grew up, the terror this singular portrait occasioned, increased..."That portrait," she would say, "appears anxious to draw me to it, and as if the lips were about to open and speak to me.—That picture will certainly cause my death."

<https://archive.org/stream/talesofdead00utte#page/192/mode/2up>