

A stylized, high-contrast illustration of Victor Frankenstein. He has wild, white hair and a dark, intense expression. He is wearing a dark coat over a white shirt. The background is a collage of scientific and medical motifs: a heart, test tubes with green liquid, a skull, a hand holding a document, and various chemical symbols and letters floating around. The overall color palette is dominated by dark blues, purples, and greens, with bright yellow for the title.

ghost
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Frankenstein

by Mary Shelley adapted by Anna Meriano

introduction by Kwame Alexander

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chapter 6

My story is long, and you must be cold,” the monster said. He invited me to sit and pulled branches off a nearby tree to start a small fire. I was more confused than ever. I didn’t know he could do that. Where had he learned manners? I realized that I didn’t know anything about him.

Once the fire was burning, the creature rubbed his hands together and cleared his throat. It took me a long time to recognize the expression on his twisted face. He was nervous.

“I hardly remember the night I came to life,” he said. “My memory is blurry. I remember confusion and pain and loneliness. I followed you out of the lab and into the street. I covered myself from the cold with a long coat I found in the doorway. People on the street screamed when they saw me. Some tried to attack. Many threw things at me.



"I quickly learned to hide my face and avoid humans. Then I got hungry. I found food in a shop window. The glass was easy to break. I didn't know why angry voices chased me. I ran far away from the city and into the forest. I got lost in the wilderness and walked all day. Finally I came to a cottage with a small woodshed. I curled up to sleep behind the pile of firewood."

The monster sat back from the fire he had built. His mouth twisted horribly. I realized he was trying to smile.

"You shouldn't have stolen from the store," I scolded him.

"I shouldn't have been alone and hungry," he replied.

I couldn't answer that.

"I awoke to voices," the creature continued. "It was morning. The family who lived in the

cottage was waking up. I wanted to run away, but I heard them speaking. Their voices were cheerful and pleasant. They sounded completely different from all the angry voices I had heard in my short life. I peeked through a cottage window. They didn't see me. I watched them."

"It's wrong to spy on people," I said. His story was proving all my suspicions. From the beginning, my creature had been drawn to wicked deeds.

"You gave me a brain and then left it empty," the monster argued. "I wanted to learn. I had no other choice."

"What did the family do when they saw you?" I asked.

"They didn't. I stayed out of sight." The monster nodded. "The cottage was home to a very old man and his teenage grandson and



granddaughter. The kids took care of the house and their grandfather. He was blind and sick. They were a poor but loving family. I stole food from their garden and slept in their woodshed without being caught.”

I dropped my head into my hands. I felt sorry for the family. They had so little food themselves and never knew they were being robbed. This was my fault, too.

“I lived this way for weeks,” the monster said, “until I started to notice how the family always did things for each other. They made each other happier by helping. And when they were happy, it made me happy. So, in secret, I did chores to help them. I only did small things. I refilled their woodshed, and kept wild animals away from the house and garden. I tried to make their lives easier without having them realize I was there.”

I was glad to hear that the monster had done a good deed. My heart twinged with a strange feeling. Was it pride? But I lifted my head and stared into his horrible eyes.

I was wrong. There was no goodness in that face. He was a monster.

“You probably took more from them than you gave,” I said harshly.

“You’re right,” the monster said. “The family gave me something invaluable. Without realizing it, they gave me knowledge. I was very lucky. Soon after I came to the cottage, a beautiful young woman from another country began to visit. She was friends with the old man’s grandson. The family worked to teach her their language, French. I learned secretly along with her. She told the family about her life growing up in Turkey. They told her how they had been

wealthy merchants in Paris before bad luck sent them here. I became curious about how I had come to be. Where was I from? I discovered that the pockets of my coat held papers. *Your* papers, lab notes about my creation. You had written all about your plan to build me out of clay and bone. You had even written your name, Victor Frankenstein, on the top of each page.”

I shuddered, remembering those pages. I had written so carefully. I’d thought the notes would be shown in a museum someday. That they would show the simple beginnings of the famous biologist.

The creature stared at me. “If you made me, why didn’t I know you? I read the notes over and over. I tried to understand what had gone wrong in your plan. Finally, I remembered the night I was created. I remembered your face staring at

me in horror. You ran away from me. You never returned.”

The monster swiped an enormous hand across his face and sniffed. “You were just like all the other humans in the street who treated me cruelly. What was so wrong with me? I was hated for the way I looked even by the person who gave me life.”

I wanted to defend myself. But the monster kept talking. I had no chance to speak.

“I was lonely and confused. I wanted to speak to the family in the cottage. I thought of them as my own family, but they had never seen me. What if they hated me, too? One morning, the girl, the boy, and his friend all took a trip into town. The blind old man stayed alone in the house. This, I decided, was my chance. People always screamed at the sight of me. Maybe

without his sight, the man would have no reason to suspect that I was different. So I worked up my courage. I knocked on the door.



“The old man invited me in and asked if I was a traveler. I told him I was. He asked if I was hungry and invited me to sit at his table. My heart warmed at this kindness. But before I could say

anything, the cottage door opened and the rest of the family hurried in. I never found out why they had come back so early. They started screaming immediately. They thought I was attacking their helpless, sick grandfather. They pushed me out of the house and chased me away. They called me a monster. With tears in my eyes, I left the only home I had ever known.”

The monster’s face was twisted in pain. He looked like a wild animal. Watching him made me clench my hands into fists. I didn’t like hearing this story.

The monster continued his tale: “I wandered heartbroken through the countryside. I stopped to drink at a pond. There was a young child at the edge of the pond. When she saw me, she screamed and fell in. Although I was afraid of humans, I was still moved by her helpless cries.

She struggled in the water. I jumped in and pulled her free. I carried her safely to the shore. It felt good to help someone, even if it wasn’t my family.

“But then a man ran out of a nearby field. He attacked me with a big stick. He threatened to kill me if I didn’t leave his daughter alone. Then I knew the truth. It didn’t matter what good deeds I did. Humans would always see me as a monster and would always try to hurt me. So I decided the only thing I could do was find you, Victor Frankenstein.

“You created me, so you’re the only one who can help me.”