



THE
FRANKENSTEIN
MURDERS

KATHLYN BRADSHAW

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PREVIEW NOT FOR RESALE

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THE JOURNAL LAY UNOPENED on the table between the two men, its black leather cover as dark and uninviting as the grave. The men seemed to avoid casting their gaze anywhere near the unwelcome object. Since they had entered the room, each man had fought the urge to toss the journal and its hateful contents upon the open fire; but, instead, they sat as if immobile, each lost in his thoughts.

They had come together to discuss the journal and its fate. A strong argument for its destruction had been countered by a call to consider the importance of the words recorded in it, as well as in the letters and other documents stored between its pages. This had brought the men to a long and uncomfortable silence.

Slowly closing his eyes as his entire form sank deeply into the padded chair, the older of the two let out a low and mournful breath. Prompted by his companion's obvious signs of distress, the younger man made bold to restate his suggestion that the journal be sent to the author's sister, as she was most deserving of an explanation. It would then be she who would decide the fate of the journal.

ENGLAND

PREVIEW NOT FOR RESALE

**THE WORDS OF VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN, AS RECORDED IN THE
JOURNAL OF CAPTAIN ROBERT WALTON**

You seek for knowledge and wisdom, as I once did; and I ardently hope that the gratification of your wishes may not be a serpent to sting you, as mine has been. I do not know that the relation of my disasters will be useful to you; yet, when I reflect that you are pursuing the same course, exposing yourself to the same dangers which have rendered me what I am, I imagine that you may deduce an apt moral from my tale, one that may direct you if you succeed in your undertaking and console you in case of failure.

**FROM A LETTER TO MRS. MARGARET SAVILLE FROM HER
BROTHER CAPTAIN ROBERT WALTON**

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. If I should be engaged, I will at least make notes. This manuscript will doubtless afford you the greatest pleasure; but to me, who knew him, and who heard it from his own lips — with what interest and sympathy shall I read it in some future day!

LETTER FROM MR. GEORGE CLERVAL TO SIR ARTHUR GRAY

Dear Arthur,

Over the years our respective companies have done much business together, and throughout our acquaintance we have sought forms of assistance from each other. This time it is I who turn to you, yet not for matters of business. Rather, my concern is entirely personal. An incident, which to this day causes me pain and remains continually in my thoughts, has only recently been brought again to my attention by another. This, as you may have already guessed, has to do with the death of my eldest child, Henry. Although this most devastating event occurred two years past, I have recently been given new information that has made everything fresh in my mind.

Less than a fortnight ago, I received a packet sent to me by Captain Ernest Frankenstein, the younger brother of Henry's travelling companion and friend from childhood, Victor Frankenstein. The packet contains the writings of an English sea captain, Robert Walton, who rescued Victor Frankenstein in the distant north. During their time together, Robert Walton transcribed the words of Victor Frankenstein, who told his host the story of his life, including the episode in which Victor and Henry, for the sake of Victor's health, travelled to England and Scotland.

The murder of my son, as you well know, occurred during that lengthy stay in England in the company of Victor Frankenstein. After leaving London, they journeyed north to Scotland; Henry to visit with friends, while Victor journeyed farther north on business of his own. While travelling to reunite with Victor, Henry was brutally and inexplicably attacked in Ireland. At that time, both my own shock and the necessity for me to see to the rest of my family, as well as the many and constant demands of my business, did not allow me to consider the murder in its fullest context, nor did it receive my full and proper attention.

What little information I had been given about my son's death was provided in a letter to me from an Irish magistrate, Mr. Kirwin. In his letter, Mr. Kirwin recounted what details of Henry's unfortunate demise had been discovered. Soon after my son's body was found, Victor Frankenstein was arrested, the authorities convinced of his guilt in respect of the crime. Immediately after his incarceration, the young man fell into a swoon and was insensible for some time. Alphonse Frankenstein, his father, rushed to his son's side in Ireland, and he intervened on his son's behalf until it was proven that Victor Frankenstein was not in the vicinity when my son was murdered.

After father and son returned to Geneva from Ireland, very few details were given me by Alphonse and Victor Frankenstein. The latter collapsed in a fit of near hysterics as he spoke with me, until he had to be taken away by his father. The further inquiries I made were politely ignored. Months later, Victor Frankenstein married his father's ward, the lovely Elizabeth Lavenza, who also was murdered. To these two most unfortunate incidences, coincidence you may think, is to be added the murder of Victor Frankenstein's youngest brother, William. The murderer, or murderers, of my beloved son and Elizabeth Frankenstein have yet to be discovered or apprehended. A young woman, Justine Moritz, was charged, found guilty, and duly executed for the murder of young William.

In contradiction to this execution, and in explanation of the other deaths, Victor Frankenstein's tale to Captain Walton puts the blame for all of the murders on a monster — a monster Victor Frankenstein claims to have created from the dead.

What anguish this story has caused me! Not only has it rekindled the pain, sorrow, and loss of a dearly loved son, it has added a strange and inexplicable mystery to the fact of his murder. The very idea that a person Henry considered to be his very good friend — even, perhaps, his best, as they had been companions since childhood — could be the cause of Henry's death appalls me. It chills me to the bone. About Victor Frankenstein there was far too much untimely and unnecessary death for me to be easy in my mind.

Victor Frankenstein's tale does not provide the ring of truth I desire. His words to Robert Walton offer insufficient explanation. I am not still in my mind, and require further proof of this monster that is said to have murdered my son and that, if it did exist, the creature did indeed destroy itself in the frozen north. Now both Alphonse and his eldest son are dead; I can get no more details from them. Ernest Frankenstein, the only remaining member of the Frankenstein family, was little connected with the entire affair, and no longer resides in Geneva.

What answers I seek require more time and endeavour than I currently have to dedicate to this matter. My living family and my business continue to occupy the majority of my attention. Out of this deficit, I turn to you. I desire a full investigation into the circumstances of my son's death. Might someone in your employ or good opinion visit Scotland, Ireland, or the territories necessary to complete a full investigation? Every spot must be visited, every witness spoken to, and in this way the steps of my son and Victor Frankenstein must be retraced in England, Scotland, Geneva, and the north. Yes, if I could I would even command that the great fields of ice and snow be scoured for any trace of the murderer.

Whatever might be necessary to gain a more definite verification of the murderer and his demise I want done. Such a man will be empowered to act as our surrogate when interviewing witnesses so that I may have a complete understanding.

Victor Frankenstein was a young man of great intelligence, but that he used it as wisely as he should have is questionable. On occasion, he could be difficult, and I know it cost his father dearly to keep his son out of the papers, if not the prisons. It is because of this that I also wonder at Victor's associates, particularly once he was in Ingolstadt, away from the protections his father undertook on his behalf.

I will not tell you more, for you will read it all in great detail in the journal that accompanies this missive. In truth, I find the story wondrously strange; it fills me with disbelief. I know not what to make of it. More easily can I believe Captain Walton and Victor Frankenstein were employed in the telling of chilling ghost stories, or perhaps they had both suffered some malady of the brain that had yet to be set to right. It is impossible to understand the story as any instance of truth. At first I struggled to come to terms with the documents enclosed in this packet, and also I wondered what I should do. Thus it has come about that I send the packet to you and resolutely beg your assistance.

The secret of this investigation into Henry's murder I must carry alone, and beg you to share only among those you deem most trustworthy. I dare not involve my family, particularly my dear wife, for whom the wound of Henry's loss remains unhealed. Truly, the unsettling nature of Captain Walton's letters and journal only increase my desire for privacy. Discretion and tact in this matter I desire most, as I have no wish to bring any more unhappy attention upon my own bereaved family, nor what little remains of the Frankenstein family. At the same time, I request haste, for every day that this is delayed, more time is lost. I realize that my expectations are great. I am, however, more than willing to compensate for this.

I desire your uncompromised assistance to resolve this matter. You will find enclosed Captain Walton's letters and journal. Do with them what you must in order to initiate an investigation. Confirm the death of the murderer, or find him and bring him to justice.

I remain your most respectful friend and associate,
George Clerval

**LETTER FROM CAPTAIN ERNEST FRANKENSTEIN TO
MR. GEORGE CLERVAL (WRITTEN ONE YEAR EARLIER)**

Sir,

Some months have passed since I left Geneva, and it has been much longer still since last we met. Sadly, our meeting at that time was after the death of my father. What greater burden can there be, sir, than the necessity of communicating unhappy intelligence and knowing the pain it shall impart. How I wish that a situation of a more pleasant nature were the cause of my writing to you now, and can only wonder who should be more greatly pitied, the relater or the receiver of evil tidings. I debated with myself for some time and came upon the conclusion that I had no option but to forward these documents to you. Do with them as you must.

The connection between your family and mine came as a result of the friendship between your son Henry and my eldest brother Victor. It is entirely because of this friendship that I write to you as I do today, although I realize this new remembrance of your son's untimely death will cause you no little distress. Recently, I came into possession of the journal of an English sea captain by the name of Walton. To the contents of his journal, you, above all others, should have access, for indeed the details of Captain Walton's writings refer specifically, and unhappily, to the murder of Henry.

I did indeed ponder if it might not be best for all if I were to destroy the letters, for they bring forward information that is unsettling at the least, and cast no complimentary light upon my family, particularly Victor. After a great deal of reflection, I realized that much of the tragedy that occurred was due to secrecy and hesitation. I determined I should not be found similarly at fault.

Captain Walton's letters contain the story of Victor's life both before and after Henry's murder. The letters explain the strange circumstances surrounding my brother's life, which may have played a role in the death of your son.

Although he maintained a need for the recognition and love of his family, Victor had a strongly private nature. My family was accustomed to and accommodated his need for solitude. He frequently divided his time among his studies of the arts and science, solitary mountain expeditions through the countryside, or sailing. His tendency was to go off on his own perambulations, once for many days, until my parents were beside themselves with worry. Eventually, it was discovered that Victor had gone to our home at Belrive without benefit of staff. Victor had a dual nature, and he was often torn between his need to be with those he loved dearly, such as Henry and our cousin Elizabeth, and his intense need for privacy. The servants and the family were barred from entering his rooms. Not even my father — as you know, a man of strong character — challenged this dictum by my brother.

The intensity and secretiveness of Victor's actions come as no surprise to me, but the true nature of his efforts whilst in Ingolstadt, and the tragic events caused as a result of them, astonish even me, who I dare say knew him better than most. Only by my reading of Captain Walton's journal have I come to be aware of Victor's activities while at university.

I fear I know not what to make of Captain Walton's letters and journal. To say that the story amazes me would only touch on the magnitude of my conflicted emotions.

You, as Henry's father, have the right to know this story and to judge Victor. I am relieved that both my father and mother were spared further pain from Victor's actions. You knew my father well; you understand the integrity with which he undertook his role in his public endeavours. He worked tirelessly. He was well respected. Honour and reputation were his greatest concern. The small consolation that I take, should Captain Walton's story be true, is that Victor's disturbing tale has ended in the cold waters of the far north.

My return to Geneva will not occur for at least another two years, and I am in continual expectation of making another journey. This is why I have elected to send you the packet of documents, although I would have preferred to hand them to you in person. If I may be of any service to you or your family, you have only to ask.

I remain your servant,
Captain Ernest Frankenstein

LETTER FROM SIR ARTHUR GRAY TO MR. GEORGE CLERVAL

My dear friend George,

Too much time has passed since we properly corresponded. Our respective present businesses cause us to be brought together less frequently than they have in the past; it has been an age since we last were face-to-face. My great unhappiness on this occasion is that it is due to tragic circumstances that we once again correspond. The news of the death of your son Henry touched us all with great sadness. I felt it particularly, knowing how very close the two of you were. While in London, Henry visited our offices briefly in respect of his India enterprise. At the time, I noted his great resemblance to his pater. It has been a source of continuous distress to me that I was unable to deliver in person my condolences to both you and Mrs. Clerval.

There can be no doubt of my willingness to help you in any way resolve the matter of Henry's death to your satisfaction. I set aside much of my professional demeanour, and hope that in this matter I may act more as friend than as business associate. I have read the letters and journal of Captain Walton and must confess I can make little of them; however, to fulfill your wish for further investigation into the murder of your son and the circumstances surrounding this most unfortunate event, I believe I can provide you with that

which you seek. With the often delicate and private nature of some of our clients' needs, we have had occasion to use the services of a person whose speciality is the investigation of matters requiring the utmost discretion. We are certain you will find Edward Freame satisfactory to your purpose.

Edward Freame's services are often secured by my firm in areas of private and personal nature. In a manner most professional, Freame conducts successful investigations. He is not unaccustomed to cases of a more unusual nature. Most recently, Freame solved the case of the sudden death of a lady of London society. While the authorities were of a mind that the death was the result of natural causes, the lady's daughter was not satisfied. Freame investigated and the truth of the matter was revealed. The death was the result of premeditated murder. The investigation created a sensation. I have included an article from the popular press in which the murder is described so that you may become familiar with Freame's manner of work.

In regard to your requirement for secrecy, I feel I should note that Freame's cases are not as a rule publicized; but, in this instance, once the guilty party had been correctly identified, our client felt no compunction against identifying the culprit and displaying his misdeeds for all to see. The article, I hope, will also give you understanding of Edward Freame's ability to solve cases that are quite out of the ordinary. He is a man of uncommon diligence and intelligence. As you will have no immediate opportunity to judge the man for yourself, I will attempt to provide you my sense of his character.

Edward Freame, at seven and twenty years, is not subject to the passions and unclear thinking of youth, nor is he unable to defend himself or to give chase when the need arises. He maintains himself in good physical condition, is no stranger to the boxing ring, and is considered a fine shot. While all about him gave in astonishment and wonder, Freame remains unaffected. He does not

allow his mind to be overwhelmed by that which he has seen or been told.

Edward Freame is the middle child. While still a young man, he visited the home of a school friend and fell in love with the governess in whose charge were the younger children of the family. Freame's own family, to say nothing of those employing the governess, were strongly against the alliance, and so the young couple eloped. As a consequence, Freame was estranged from his family. The elder Mr. Freame died within a year of his son's marriage. Freame, having finished but a portion of his first year reading law at Cambridge, and needing to support his new family, chose to apply his sharp mind to other areas of the law. He worked with Fielding's Bow Street Runners until two years ago — until the sudden death of his young wife. He then left Fielding's group, and has worked almost entirely for this firm ever the since.

Edward Freame's only child resides with an older sister; he is unencumbered and more than qualified to undertake an investigation such as yours. I will notify him at once of your requirements and with your implicit agreement pass on the journal of Captain Robert Walton so that Freame may become acquainted with the details of your case. I would request you forward us immediately the letter you received from the Irish magistrate, Mr. Kirwin, and all other related documents in your possession. Every known intelligence related to Henry's murder must be given to Mr. Freame in order that he may begin his investigation with the utmost assurance and confidence.

Freame has consistently provided my firm with satisfactory results, and I trust you will be equally satisfied with the information he gathers on your behalf. He is possessed of excellent faculties of observation, and in his application of great insight into the evidence provided therefrom is he provided with the ability to solve a case. He will do his best to achieve an outcome that will silence the disquiet that continues to disturb you.

You and I are no longer at an age when travel of any distance is desirable. I could well live easily with this fact, were it not for the sorrow I feel at the physical geography that lies between us. I remain, dear sir, with respectful compliments to your wife and daughters, your well-wisher and friend,

Sir Arthur Gray
Holmwood, Gray, Cameron, and Associates

Murder at 112 Grosvenor Place

The mysterious death of Lady Emilia Chesterlock of Grosvenor Square was solved by Mr. Edward Freame, investigator, employed by Holmwood, Gray, Cameron, and Associates. Lady Chesterlock married Lord Humphrey Chesterlock after the death of her first husband, shipping magnate Mr. Frank Beardsley. Upon the death of her second husband, Lady Chesterlock took up permanent residence at 112 Grosvenor Place. Early in the morning on the eleventh of December, Mrs. Chesterlock's body was found burned beyond recognition in an armchair. Initially, it was believed she had died through strange yet natural causes of combustion, where a body will burn of its own accord.

The night of Lady Chesterlock's death, she had attended a musical

soiree. Upon her return home, Lady Chesterlock took a small glass of sherry — her nightly custom. She was not seen again until early the next morning, when the housemaid found her mistress's charred remains in the sitting room. The housemaid went into hysterics at the sight and had to be calmed by the other servants. The butler summoned the police.

Only Lady Chesterlock's right ankle and foot encased in a satin slipper remained; the rest had burned, along with the seat, back, and part of the arms of the chair. Nothing else in the room was damaged, save for pieces of broken glass on the flagstone hearth. After careful consideration, the police agreed that Lady Chesterlock's death was the result of spontaneous combustion; the fire screen was securely

in place, and the matches carefully stowed in a decorative box upon the mantle.

Lady Chesterlock resided alone in the Grosvenor Square house, after her only daughter married Mr. Charles Lowrey of Bath. The house had been bequeathed to her by her late husband, Sir Humphrey, who had been widowed before they met. Sir Humphrey had a son by his first wife. The London house, although still belonging to Sir Humphrey's family, had been willed to the use of his second wife for the duration of her life, after which it would return to the exclusive use of his own family, namely his only son, Sir Ian Chesterlock. Lady Chesterlock's daughter, Mrs. Charles Lowrey of Bath, uneasy because of the unusual circumstances surrounding the strange death of her mother, immediately requested that Holmwood, Gray, Cameron, and Associates investigate the matter further. Mr. Edward Freame was charged with the investigation.

At first, Mr. Freame examined Lady Chesterlock's sitting room, in particular the burnt armchair. He noticed a dark oily spot on the wool carpet at a distance quite removed from those stains beneath the chair and was informed by the housekeeper that the stain had certainly not been there before Lady Chesterlock's death. Mr. Freame took the carpet and tested it by cutting it into pieces and burn-

ing both the stained parts and those that were not. He noted that the part of carpet soaked only by the oily substance burned in moments. The rest of the carpet took significantly longer to combust. Mr. Freame then conducted an experiment wherein he took a dead sow, wrapped it in a fabric similar to that of the dress that Lady Chesterlock wore on the night of her death, and placed it in an armchair identical to the ones found in her sitting room. He then doused the sow in lamp oil and lit the oil on fire. The body burnt hotly and quickly, except for the extremities, the bottom halves of the sow's back legs.

Mr. Freame additionally salvaged some of the liquid from the shards of glass on the fireplace, which the police had earlier identified as the remains of Lady Chesterlock's sherry bottle. He fed a small portion of the liquid to a mouse. The mouse immediately went into a deep slumber from which it could not be woken. Through further questioning of the servants, Mr. Freame also discovered that Sir Ian Chesterlock had visited his stepmother earlier that week and had left her a gift of a bottle of her favourite sherry. Mr. Edward Freame also found a London apothecary who remembered Sir Ian Chesterlock, who had complained of insomnia. The apothecary sold Sir Ian Chesterlock a large amount of a potent

sedative. Upon inspection of several pairs of Sir Ian Chesterlock's gloves, Mr. Freame identified that they were soaked in the same oil as that which had been found on the carpet at 112 Grosvenor Place.

Knowing intimately the habits of his stepmother, Sir Ian Chesterlock waited until all the lights in the house except those in the sitting room had been extinguished. Having in his possession a key to 112 Grosvenor Place, unknown to the servants, he let himself into his stepmother's home. There he found, just as he had planned, his stepmother deeply asleep in her armchair. He emptied a large container of lamp oil over her, completely soaking her hair and clothes. It was his intention that his stepmother should be considered the victim of the unusual instance of spontaneous combustion.

When questioned by Mr. Freame in the presence of the police, Sir

Ian Chesterlock first fell into a convulsive fit before he confessed to everything entirely. Once he had regained his composure, he admitted to holding hefty gambling debts; he thus needed possession of his father's London home in order that he might sell it. Although Sir Ian Chesterlock had inherited his family's country estate, the property was entailed. Sir Ian Chesterlock had lived beyond his means and was deeply in debt long before his father, Sir Humphrey, had died. Sir Ian Chesterlock was not willing to wait until his stepmother died a natural death. He had even been known to comment disparagingly about how "inconsiderately long-lived" the women in his stepmother's family were — Lady Chesterlock's own mother lives still. Sir Ian Chesterlock remains in the custody of the police, and his case will be taken to trial within the month.

LETTER FROM SIR ARTHUR GRAY TO EDWARD FREAME

Freame,

Certainly you have seen the article written about the Chesterlock case. It is no small surprise that such a sensational case made the papers; such an awful crime would be difficult to keep quiet. I am going to take the responsibility of giving an opinion.

Although I wondered at the appropriateness of making public such a private scandal, once Mrs. Lowrey knew for certain her stepbrother was the culprit, she was not against naming him publicly as the murderer so that all might know what he had done. Sir Ian Chesterlock will now have to face a judge, and I think he will not find himself favourably looked upon. Lady Chesterlock was well respected and moved in prestigious circles. Her stepson's conduct was criminal, a disgrace to his family's good name. We are none of us surprised that Sir Ian Chesterlock's ill-conceived actions should be followed by serious consequences.

Since publication of the details of the Chesterlock case, I have received a number of requests for your services. I have felt the requests were largely due to the sensationalism of the last case as depicted in the papers and the cases themselves to have no merit of their own. One case, however, in a matter more personal to me, has merit and I believe to be worth your attention. I would like you to

investigate the murder of Henry Clerval, the son of my long-time friend, Mr. George Clerval.

Mr. Clerval is a gentleman currently residing in Geneva with whom I have long had a business association, and who is also, I am glad to say, an old and dear friend. Holmwood, Gray, Cameron, and Associates has assisted Mr. Clerval's company in numerous commercial undertakings here in England. Mr. Clerval's son, Henry, was murdered under mysterious circumstances. Recently, the documents I have included with this letter were made known to Mr. Clerval, but rather than shed light on his son's murder, they have only added more mystery to the tragedy. The letters and journal of Captain Robert Walton have left Mr. Clerval more perplexed and uncertain than before. Mr. Clerval would like to enjoy the benefits of a broader and deeper investigation, and I have selected you as the person most able to assist him in fulfilling his request.

Until having received Captain Walton's journal, Mr. Clerval had been persuaded that his son Henry's murder was as a result of a robbery. The Captain's journal tells quite a different story. You must start your investigation by reading the journal of Captain Walton. I warn you: the pages herein contain a strange tale indeed, stranger perhaps than other cases that have been in your capable hands. The story, as told by Victor Frankenstein and written down by Captain Robert Walton, describes a creature — sewn together from corpses and invigorated with electricity until it lived again — that murdered Mr. Clerval's son. Indeed, if the facts of the case are stated correctly, it would make far greater sense to me that Henry Clerval had been robbed, or that his friend Victor Frankenstein had committed the crime. I have great difficulty in believing that what was once dead was brought to life, and that the same creature became a murderer.

On behalf of Holmwood, Gray, Cameron, and Associates, I direct you to acquire all that you need in order to begin to

investigate the Clerval case. This investigation must be handled with even greater discretion than ever has been our custom. Mr. Clerval searches for his own peace of mind; what little composure his family and others have regained must not be disrupted. His wife has been unwell since Henry's death, and so Mr. Clerval travels only when absolutely necessary.

You may have already divined that this case will not keep you in London; you will be given an ample advance to cover all expenses you shall incur. You will find in George Clerval a most generous and fair employer. Time and travel will be needed. Mr. Clerval has indicated that no cost is to be spared and every effort is to be taken to solve this mystery as quickly as possible. I am at your disposal should you need any further assistance. I await reports of your findings.

I place my trust in you to see that the investigation into the strange death of Henry Clerval is handled appropriately.

Sir Arthur Gray
Holmwood, Gray, Cameron, and Associates