

Characters

- Barkeep (M/F)** - A common-sensical, self-aware owner of a local pub.
- Gunter (M)** - Obtuse laboratory partner to Dr. Ivanov.
- Igor (M)** - Distressed laboratory partner to Dr. Frankenstein.
- Dr. Frankenstein (M)** - Maniacal scientist with poor communication skills.
- Dr. Tesla (M)** - Creepy, psychotically-clingy scientist bent on having Igor as a laboratory assistant.
- Dr. Ivanov (F)** - Snobbish, prideful mentor to Dr. Frankenstein.
- Monkey Hybrid 1 (M/F)** - Delinquent creations of Dr. Ivanov.
- Monkey Hybrid 2 (M/F)** - Delinquent creations of Dr. Ivanov.
- Monkey Hybrid 3 (M/F)** - Delinquent creations of Dr. Ivanov.

Scene 1 - Pub

(Lights on downstage centre only. A German barkeep enters. He walks to centre stage and casually leans on something—a stack of crates or a barrel, for instance. After a moment, his gaze finds the audience.)

Barkeep: **(Surprised and rather confused)** Oh, guten tag!

(After a pause that seems to go on slightly too long, the Barkeep awkwardly waves towards the audience. Thereafter, looks upstage and then back to the audience, confused.)

Barkeep: Why are you all staring at me? Huh? ... The lederhosen doesn't emphasise my beer belly, does it? **(Defensively)** Well if so, I'll have you know this is 50 pounds of pure muscle... Yeah, that's right, I had to work for this. Spherical muscles. Takes a lot of core stre... Okay your constant staring is getting a little too creepy. I mean, just put yourself in my position for a bit, okay? Here I am, a simple barkeep on break, and as I turn the corner I behold a darkened expanse beset with this swathe of unblinking eyes staring into the deepest crevices of my soul! And really judgmentally, too. Like you're a bunch of critics just waiting for me to do something wrong. It's like you're expecting me to entertain you. Give you a story or something, I don't know. I guess I could be hallucinating. You know, that's probably what's happening here. A lot of strange projects take place near this town. I suppose there's a lot of chemicals, and they're probably making me hallucinate... faces... vividly. Like an audience. **(Looking around)** I guess that would explain why the town's been slowly turning into a stage. Well, whatever the case, you seem rather bent on... watching. So, why don't I get you something to watch, huh? Why don't I show you to my pub? There's a lot of interesting people there. People, other than me, that your unsettling gazes can fixate upon. In fact, I know a guy right now who is going through severe relationship troubles. Eh? That's interesting, right? Relationship troubles? People always have odd fascinations with those. Although, I should say, it's not quite the kind of relationship you're probably thinking of. It's... it's different. But, at the very least, it should get you to stop hawking those creeper-peepers of yours at me.

(The upstage lights come on as the Barkeep walks, rather quickly, to the pub. As the Barkeep enters, the audience sees a dimly lit, run-down establishment. Gunter, a filth-ridden labourer, sits at the bar.)

Gunter: **(Somewhat inebriated)** Ah, you're back. What took you so long?

Barkeep: I'm having a hallucinatory experience in which I'm a self-aware character, created for commentary and audience-interaction in a stage play.

Gunter: What?

Barkeep: Uh... You want another drink?

Gunter: Oh yeah, sure.

(As the Barkeep moves behind the bar)

Gunter: Well, so like I was saying before. I told her, right. If you don't watch 'em much, of course the little monkeys are gonna start having run-ins with the police. But no, she says that's not putting enough trust in them. She says they're good, and when they're not she puts all the blame on me! It's like, man, why'd I agree to work with this woma—

(Gunter turns and sees Igor enter)

Gunter: Heh-heh-hey, Igor! It's about time, man. I was starting to wonder if you'd come tonight.

Igor: Sorry I'm late.

(Igor begins to cross over to the bar, fatigue displayed in every step.)

Barkeep: **(To the audience)** This is the guy, so stop watching me and start staring at him. **(Turning to Igor)** What'll ya' have, Igor?

Igor: Whatever's your strongest.

(Igor sits at the bar with audible strain. The Barkeep begins preparing a drink.)

Gunter: That bad, huh?

Igor: Eh, my partner's been very...difficult lately.

Gunter: How so?

Igor: Oh, you know how the 'stay-at-home' ones are. How they get really, *really* invested in their little projects. And they expect you to do all the work too, getting supplies for those...oh, those expensive habits. And then, when you do something wrong, they don't tell ya' what it is! They just stare at you, like you're some sort of idiot, and expect you to realise what you did...They're all snobbish and...and high minded.

(Igor accepts a mug from the Barkeep)

Igor: It's exhausting.

Gunter: Tell me about it. For the longest time, mine was obsessed with this little craft project.

Igor: What project?

Gunter: Oh, you know, making hybrid monkey-people.

Igor: I heard about that.

Gunter: And she cooked ‘em up in her lab, too. I guess it was fun to make them, but now I have to take care of ‘em and everything...Hybrid monkey-people. I mean, where’d she get an idea like that?

Igor: Evil scientists’ minds just work differently, I guess.

Gunter: It’s because they’re crazy!

Igor: No, no, I wouldn’t go that far...But even if mine is, it wouldn’t have mattered at first, ya’ know? Back when he was gaunt and intimidating...had really nice beakers and, ho ho, you should’ve seen the goggles on that guy! But now...now he’s just really lettin’ himself go. I mean, he’s got a pot-belly and everything. That’s not scary...least not in the right way

(Barkeep shoots a hurt glance towards Igor).

Igor: **(After a reflective sigh)** It’s just not the same anymore.

Gunter: Hmm...But hey, ya’ still getta’ have fun in the la-bor-a-tory, right?

Igor: Yeah, but the laboratory just isn’t as good as it used to be. I-I don’t even know what I’m doin’ half the time. My partner’s into a lot of weird experimenting. He’s also kinda’ demeaning, ya’ know? Like just last night, I got a little tired...just a little tired, like we all do. Then he started yelling at me: “Oh, is that all the stamina you’ve got? Get up and put the lightning rod back into the contraption ya’ little—”

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(As Igor speaks, Gunter periodically inserts a ‘yeah’ or ‘eesh’ to display his agreement.)

Barkeep: **(To the audience)** Oh meine güte, I’m so sorry everyone! **(To Igor)** Igor! I ask that you kindly refrain from detailing your...laboratory life...in the middle of my pub.

Igor: There’s no one else here.

Barkeep: I’m here. Also there might be a bunch of weirdoes staring at you right now.

Gunter: Don’t listen to ‘em, he’s hallucinating.

Igor: **(To the Barkeep)** Well...sorry.

Gunter: (**Ducking towards Igor**) But did he really say that?

Igor: Okay no, he didn't *verbally* say that. B-but he said it with his eyes, alright...Like I said, it's exhausting.

Gunter: Well if it's that bad, you might want to think about getting a new lab partner, huh?

Igor: A...a new partner?

Gunter: Sure! Why limit yourself, man? You're not committed to this one or anything, are you?

Igor: ...(Unsure) No. (More confident) No, of course not. Why would I be?

Gunter: Well, so forget that guy! Tell 'em you're not takin' his junk anymore. Tell 'em you're gonna go out, straight away, and find someone new. Someone better. An evil scientist who respects you.

Igor: Yeah, yeah okay. Sure...sur—But are we sure that's a good idea?

Gunter: (**Placing an empty mug on the bar**) What makes you think I wouldn't be giving good advice right now?

Barkeep: (**To audience**) Given that I'm apparently a self-aware character, I feel I should say something to mimic the audience's internal reaction to this horrible advice. Listen to this. (**To Igor**) Or...you could try communicating your worries to your partner in an honest, direct, and equal discourse with the intent to resolve or accept your differences and remain committed to fostering a healthy relationship to the best of your ability—preferably through an institutional manner of commitment, such as a legal contract—and, only after exhausting every option to attain such a desirable outcome, part ways respectfully.

(pause)

Gunter: ...Huh? Oh sorry, I didn't catch any of that. I was just thinkin' of a really good metaphor. Listen to this. Partners, right? They're like ale: they're fun for night, but a real hassle if those chemicals last until morning.

Barkeep: (**To audience**) Well, we tried guys.

Gunter: Anyways, listen Igor...I hear Dr. Tesla's looking for someone new.

Igor: Dr. Tesla? We've had some conversations before, but I dunno. He may be out of my league...I've heard stories about his—(gulps)—his Anti-gravitational Liquefying Mark Two Double 'O' Negative Laser Rifle... You really think I'd have a chance?

Gunter: Guess you'll have to find out. But I'll just say, from what I heard, he had a good impression of you.

Igor: Right, I'll keep that in mind. (**Looking outward, as if glancing through a window**) Darwin's turtle! It's almost sunset! I've gotta' get back to Frankenstein's. See ya' guys later!

(Igor runs offstage.)

Gunter: See ya'.

Barkeep: Great! Audience, follow him now. This is no longer my problem.

Gunter: (**To self**) Wait, Frankenstein...Frankenstein? Where have I heard that name before? (**After considering for a moment**) Eh, I can't remember. I'm sure it'll be fine. (**To Barkeep**) Anyways, what'd ya' think about my metaphor? Pretty good, huh?

Barkeep: I'm so relieved this is no longer my problem.

(Blackout.)

Scene 2 - Frankenstein's Laboratory

(In the midst of a laboratory, a table—surrounded by coils and tubes—upholds a dormant Monster covered by a blanket. Adjacent to the table stand several equipment-strewn desks and a pedestal displaying a large button. Dr. Frankenstein stands behind the table, laughing maniacally to himself while attached to the blanketed Monster via a cord affixed to a helmet. Igor enters from downstage right, carrying a crate of equipment.)

Dr. Frankenstein: (Maniacally, though playfully) Oh hello, Igor.

Igor: (Tired) Hello Victor... You seem excited.

Dr. Frankenstein: Yes, yes Igor: I'm very excited, very excited indeed! I wanted to talk to you about the next stages of our work.

Igor: Oh, I actually wanted to talk to you about that, too.

(Not listening to Igor, Dr. Frankenstein giggles manically while circling the table, moving downstage.)

Igor: It's just... Well, I was talking to a friend and... I just think...

(Igor's stammering is drowned out as Dr. Frankenstein erupts in a fit of maddened laughter. Frightened, Igor drops his crate of equipment, its contents spilling out over the stage.)

Igor: V-Victor?

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Dr. Frankenstein: We've done it, Igor! We've finally done it! The project you've been helping me with is nearing fruition. And all those who doubted me—who doubted us—who hamstrung our glorious work will rue this day, and spend their final moments gawking upon our creation with fear utmost!

Igor: O-our creation?

Dr. Frankenstein: All I need do, Igor, is push this button and my wondrous contraption will spew forth life into a Monster!

(Laughing maniacally, Dr. Frankenstein pulls the blanket off the Monster with a dramatic flourish.)

Igor: A monster?!

Dr. Frankenstein: Yeeeees, a beautifully disgusting, disgustingly beautiful monster!

(Dr. Frankenstein begins to move towards the button, giggling.)

Igor: Victor...V-Victor? Victor?! **(As Dr. Frankenstein is about to push the button)** Dr. Frankenstein, may I speak?!

Dr. Frankenstein: Huh? Oh, I'm sorry Igor, did you have something to say?

Igor: **(Sighing with anguished shock)** Yes, Victor! I have something to say...A monster?!

Dr. Frankenstein: Yes, a monster! That's what I've been saying! You might want to become a better listener, Igor.

Igor: Victor, it's just...A monster's a lot of responsibility. I mean, we should've at least talked about this before.

Dr. Frankenstein: **(Mocking)** Igor, you're being a little worry-pants. Stop it, it's annoying.

Igor: Annoying?! I'm annoying?! And you're shocking! I mean, how...how are we gonna' care for this thing?

Dr. Frankenstein: **(Casually)** Oh, I don't know. We'll hire a nanny to take care of it or something. Maybe your sister can help with it.

Igor: Are you kidding me?! How can you treat this so casually?!

Dr. Frankenstein: Oh for all that is dark and vile in this world Igor, it isn't that big a deal. We're only bringing a life into this world.

Igor: **(After a pause)** *uh-huh!*

Dr. Frankenstein: **(As if almost realising something)** Huh...We're only bringing...a life into this world...

Igor: Uh-huh, and?

Dr. Frankenstein: And...and? Hold on, I almost have it.

Igor: **(Face palming)** Oh, Darwin's turtle.

Dr. Frankenstein: We're only bringing... You know Igor, I think...maybe...I'm starting to see where you're coming from. I guess this is kind of a big deal. I mean...**(Realisation dawning)** Oh mein g \ddot{u} te! We're bringing a life into this world!

Igor: Finally!

Dr. Frankenstein: Why didn't you warn me about this Igor?!

Igor: (Flabbergasted) W-w-what?!

Dr. Frankenstein: I mean, a little comment at an earlier stage of the monster's development would have been nice!

Igor: I didn't know you were making a monster!

Dr. Frankenstein: (Gesturing to the table and mass of tubes and coils) Then what did you think this hulking mass dangling from my body was?! What did you think we've been doing in the la-bor-a-tory all this time?!

Igor: I don't—I just thought we were having fun! I didn't think we were going to go through with something like this!

Dr. Frankenstein: Oh really? Well buddy, you should have thought of that before inserting your lightning rod into the monster-making machine without a layer of insulating protection! This is your fault inasmuch as it is mine!

(Not knowing how to respond, Igor stomps his foot with a frustrated grunt and walks downstage left, not facing Frankenstein.)

Dr. Frankenstein: (After a pause) Look Igor, I'm sorry. I shouldn't have yelled: that was very unprofessional of me...It's just...I was so excited. Okay? And maybe I didn't really consider the nature of the situation...but I just feel I've become emotionally invested in this project, alright? I want it to succeed: I really, really do.

Igor: Well, I'm not ready for this. Just pull the plug on the machine, chop up that monster—maybe sell its parts to a university or something—and then let's get back to the way things used to be.

Dr. Frankenstein: I can't just terminate the...experiment now! I've already announced the project to my colleagues. And Dr. Ivanov, who you know has been like a mother to me, was very excited about getting a new member of the evil family. She would be so disappointed if I backed out now.

Igor: And I'd be disappointed if you didn't.

Dr. Frankenstein: (Turning to Igor) No, Igor! I must not, I cannot abandon this project! You're right, a Monster is a lot of responsibility. And perhaps we're unprepared for it. But we must be resolute. We will bring a monster into this world and it will cement our names, Igor, into the annals of scientific history!

Igor: Pfft. There's no guarantee he'll be that successful. (Turning to Dr. Frankenstein) Maybe he'll end up a bum along with Dr. Ivanov's monkey hybrids. ...And besides, this monster wouldn't have a good life. You'd present it before a few conventions and then what? We don't have the resources to care for it beyond that.

Dr. Frankenstein: I'll get the resources! I'll get a second job at the pub or something. Or maybe not there. I may have accidentally dropped hallucinogenic chemicals in the alley behind it. But that's beside the point. I mean, how hard can it be, Igor? We've been through a lot together and we can get through this. It's just two ol' lab partners concocting evil schemes like the old days. Trust me when I say, it will be fine.

Igor: ...No Frankenstein. If you're going through with this, then you'll be concocting your evil schemes alone.

(Igor walks downstage right and kneels before his fallen crate of equipment.)

Dr. Frankenstein: What do you...? Igor? You're not leaving me? Igor? ...Igor! Where are you going?! At this pivotal stage in the development of our monster and our professional relationship, you're just getting up and walking away?!

Igor: I didn't agree to this, Frankenstein.

Dr. Frankenstein: But what about us? Isn't our relationship worth it?

Igor: **(Turning to look at Dr. Frankenstein)** Our relationship isn't the same anymore! It doesn't have the chemistry it used to.

Dr. Frankenstein: Oh no, hang on. I poured sulfuric acid on you just yesterday: that is, literally, feeling the chemistry of the relationship! It's not my fault that things are different now.

Igor: But it is your fault! You're not the same scientist...

Dr. Frankenstein: In what way?

(Igor pauses, looking at Frankenstein's stomach.)

Dr. Frankenstein: **(After following Igor's gaze)** Oh ho ho. Okay buddy! Just because I've put on a few pounds during this process doesn't mean I'm not the same Frankenstein you fell in evil with! **(Choking back tears)** I'm as much an evil scientist as ever...It's just, I've been really stressed out lately. I get emotional over everything, I'm craving chocolate for some reason, and this is the last lab coat I fit in...I had to steal it from a hospital. But you know what Igor, I am trying. Okay? I've poured my despicable heart and my repugnant soul into this relationship! And here you are just throwing it away.

Igor: It was never more than a bit of fun, doctor. Don't be clingy.

Dr. Frankenstein: Oh I'm being clingy, am I? I'm limiting you? Well, you haven't been limited for a long time, have you Igor?

Igor: What are you talking about?

Dr. Frankenstein: Oh don't deny it! I saw you talking to that Dr. Tesla at the last evil convention. And you two were really hitting it off, weren't you? Talking about death lasers and armies of psychokinetic robots! ... We used to have conversations like that, Igor. We used to—I can't.

Igor: **(After a pause)** Goodbye Frankenstein.

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(Igor reaches down, grabs the crate, and begins to walk away.)

Dr. Frankenstein: Fine, Igor! But when our Monster makes me the most infamous villain in the world, don't come crawling back to me. **(Suggestively gesturing to self, calling out as Igor exits downstage right)** And for the record, Dr. Tesla would be lucky to have these evil curves.

(Dr. Frankenstein is left alone in his laboratory. He looks downstage right after Igor, then to the dormant Monster on the table. After a moment, he begins to cry. Blackout.)

Scene 3 - Dr. Tesla's Lounge

(Dr. Tesla rests in a cushioned chair downstage right, opposite a wooden stool. A table upholding drinks stands between the seats. Igor enters downstage left.)

- Dr. Tesla:** Ah welcome, Igor. It's so good to see you again.
- Igor:** Hello, Dr. Tesla. Thanks for agreeing to meet.
- Dr. Tesla:** Eh, I was in Germany to talk to some colleagues, so it was a sort of...why not?
- Igor:** Oh, I didn't think you had colleagues he—
- Dr. Tesla:** Yes well anyway, I just...happened to be in town when you called.
- Igor:** (**Shy**) Well, it's a very happy coincidence. I've been wanting to work with you for a while.
- Dr. Tesla:** Ever since the convention, the feeling's been mutual, I assure you. Now, let's discuss the terms of your employment.
- Igor:** Oh I'd love to, doctor. What did you have in mind?
- Dr. Tesla:** I only wanted to set a few ground rules. Nothing too overbearing. Just enough for me to know you'll be a faithful lab partner.
- Igor:** What makes you think I won't be faithful?
- Dr. Tesla:** Oh, maybe the fact that you're looking for new work despite leaving your previous partner only, eh, a few hours ago? When he was about to have a monster no less?
- Igor:** Ah yes...that. Wait, how did you know—
- Dr. Tesla:** But it's okay, because I'm (**inhales audibly**) just infatuated with your evident skills as a research assistant, and this has led me to overlook your abundant flaws.
- Igor:** But I only left because—
- Dr. Tesla:** Oh don't worry, I know everything about the situation.
- Igor:** ...Okay...How and why?
- Dr. Tesla:** Well, I like the prospect of working with you so much that I compulsively want to know everything about you: your thoughts, feelings, problems, likes and dislikes, and your precise location at every waking moment.
- Igor:** Uh...

Dr. Tesla: Oh and your precise location at every sleeping moment as well.
(Chuckles, as if recalling a fond memory) That's always fun.

Igor: **(Abruptly)** Right, well this has been...enlightening. **(Rising from the stool)** But...uh...I need to move to Albania under an alias—er, I mean, get some fresh air.

Dr. Tesla: **(Casually)** No.

Igor: No? What do you mean no?

Dr. Tesla: **(Giggling playfully)** I mean, well, **(dropping their smile)** I strapped a tracking device to your ankle.

Igor: What?! When did yo—

Dr. Tesla: **(Pulling a portable monitoring device from under the chair cushion)** You're not going to Albania or anywhere else without my knowing.
(Gesturing to the monitoring device) I'll always know where you are.

Igor: Well...so what? That's not gonna stop me from leaving.

Dr. Tesla: **(Producing a massive, coil-ridden gun)** No, but my Anti-gravitational Liquefying Mark Two Double 'O' Negative Laser Rifle might.

Igor: **(After a pause)** Should we go to the lab then?

(Blackout)

Scene 4 - Dr. Frankenstein's Laboratory

(Dr. Frankenstein sits against the button-bearing pedestal in his laboratory, holding an empty bottle.)

Dr. Frankenstein: Igo-o...I-Igor! How dare you, Ig- (*gag reflex*) -or! How dare you deny yours-a-sa, sa-sa-self all this for a partner! H-how could you be soooo stupid?

(Dr. Ivanov and Gunter enter.)

Dr. Ivanov: Oh my, what a disgusting laboratory.

Gunter: Oh come now, Master Ivanov. I don't think it's that bad.

Dr. Ivanov: That's because you're an obtusely ignorant slob who can't distinguish rotting slime from breakfast.

(Behind Dr. Ivanov, Gunter is tasting a bit of slime from a beaker sitting upon a nearby desk).

Gunter: (*Aside*) Well, it's better than your cooking.

Dr. Frankenstein: Igor? Haveh you come crawlin' back to me?

Dr. Ivanov: (**Looking around**) Victor? Victor is that you?

Dr. Frankenstein: (**Standing up**) Oh don't V-Victor me. I am your superior, you cheating, backstabbing, unfaithful (**trailing off upon seeing Dr. Ivanov**) swine...

Dr. Ivanov: Good to see my former student's getting along well. How've you been, Victor?

Dr. Frankenstein: Ah ha...F-fantastic! Truly (**gag reflex**) fantastic.

Dr. Ivanov: Fantastic? (**Gesturing towards Dr. Frankenstein**) Then do you mind explaining what this is?

Dr. Frankenstein: What? ...(**Holding up the bottle**) Oh, this? This is just a...a frivolity; a celebration of my indubit-a-bible success.

Dr. Ivanov: First, you're not supposed to drink while preparing to have a monster. Second, I was gesturing towards your massive stomach.

Dr. Frankenstein: Ouch (**dropping his facade**) what do you people have against beer bellies? Okay, yesh. My min-ninion, Igor, and I have been goin' through a little fight. Okay?

Gunter: (**Looking up from the slime**) Igor? Oh, huh, I have a drinking buddy named Igor. Yeah, I was just telling him he should leave his partner for Dr. Tesla. What a coinkydink.

Dr. Frankenstein: Y-you... You what?

Dr. Ivanov: **(Sighing)** Oh dear.

Dr. Frankenstein: You... Y-you what?!

Gunter: **(Still licking the slime)** Hm?

Dr. Frankenstein: **(Stumbling towards Gunter)** Yo-ou get ov-over here ya' drinkink buddy!
You alcoholkic imbecile!

Gunter: Oh wait? Are we talkin' about the same Igor?

Dr. Frankenstein: I'ma gonna **(gag reflex)** strangle ya' with your own entrails!

Dr. Ivanov: Gunter, you should leave.

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Gunter: Oh, I get it, you're the Frankenstein Igor was talking about. I knew I recognised your name from somewhere...

(Dr. Frankenstein screams in a drunken rage.)

Dr. Ivanov: Gunter!

Gunter: **(Somewhat frantically)** Oh, as you wish, Dr. Ivanov.

(Gunter moves to exit, rushes back to grab the beaker of slime, then exits.)

Dr. Frankenstein: Good ridishnence!

Dr. Ivanov: I sincerely hope your partner's absence isn't jeopardising your project, Victor.

Dr. Frankenstein: And so what if it ish?! Why do you care?

Dr. Ivanov: Two reasons. First, I helped fund your little experiment. I gave you money when you needed...told you to enjoy your research and take responsibility for the aftermath, whatever it may be. Second, I won't have you mar my reputation as a teacher. I didn't mentor you to buckle under the strain of consequence: you had fun in the laboratory and now you have to care for the result.

Dr. Frankenstein: Care for the re-result? But I can't d-do that on my own! I won't!

Dr. Ivanov: Don't tell me you're going to terminate the experiment!

Dr. Frankenstein: Well what else am I supposed to do?! ...I guess. Here. What if I cr-create the monster and give it to **(gag reflex)** another scientist. Let it contribute to science or whatever, sure, but a-away from me.

Dr. Ivanov: No. I did not mentor you to flee from responsibil—

Dr. Frankenstein: But giv-giv—**(aside)** curse this **(gag reflex)** drink—giving it to someone else i-is the res-esponsible thing!

Dr. Ivanov: Not for my student, it isn't. If you give it away, that's throwing out everything you've worked for and everything I've funded.

Dr. Frankenstein: Well what do ya' want m-me to do then?! Huh? What can-an I do?

Dr. Ivanov: You can execute the experiment, rear the result to be a successful killing machine, and make your mentor proud.

Dr. Frankenstein: But how?

Dr. Ivanov: The same way you've always done it. The way I taught you to do it. With evil cunning...With your maniacal enthusiasm!

Dr. Frankenstein: W-what enthusis—enthu—sism?

Dr. Ivanov: **(Grabbing Dr. Frankenstein by the shoulders)** The enthusiasm I'm sure you have within that genius-ally mangled mind of yours. The enthusiasm just waiting to burst in a fit of euphoric madness. The enthusiasm that makes you Dr. Victor Frankenstein!

Dr. Frankenstein: **(Sinking from Dr. Ivanov's grasp)** I...I d-on't have it anymore.

Dr. Ivanov: **(After consideration)** Laugh.

Dr. Frankenstein: What? Why?

Dr. Ivanov: Just do it. Laugh.

(After a forlorn sigh, Dr. Frankenstein lets out a sarcastic chuckle.)

Dr. Ivanov: Come on. Keep going.

Dr. Frankenstein: Oh come on, this isn't g-going to—

Dr. Ivanov: Don't question me. Do it.

(Dr. Frankenstein lets out another chuckle, followed by several more. As Dr. Ivanov continues coaxing, Dr. Frankenstein's sarcastic chuckles transform into spurts of vexed—though insincere—laughter.)

As the coaxing turns to goading, Dr. Frankenstein's laughing gradually becomes more intense, erupting into prolonged bursts of angry—though still insincere—laughter. Finally, as these angry bursts synthesize into a continuous stream of laughter, a maddened smile grows across Dr. Frankenstein's face, melding with the laughter to produce a maniacal fit of distorted elation.)

Dr. Frankenstein: Very well, Igor! If you want to leave, then leave! If you want to abandon me and my monster, good riddance! I am, without question, a strong, independent, and incontrovertibly mad scientist! **(To Dr. Ivanov)** Doctor, let's bring a life into this world!

Dr. Ivanov: Of course, Dr. Frankenstein.

(Dr. Ivanov places the helmet, attached via cord to the Monster, on Dr. Frankenstein's head.)

Dr. Frankenstein: Deny yourself this joy, Igor! You will learn what it is to become my enemy!

(Dr. Ivanov presses the button upon the pedestal. Amidst the roar of thunder, the sparking hum of electricity, and the demoniac 'yeses' of Dr. Frankenstein, the Monster gradually rises from its table.)

Dr. Frankenstein: It's...it's alive! It's alive! *! It's alive!* Yes: rise, rise, rise my glorious creation! Free yourself from the bonds of deathly dormancy and rise! **(As the Monster fully sits up)** Dr. Ivanov, help me get it off the table.

Dr. Ivanov: Very well. **(Touching the Monster)** Egh, it's slimy.

Dr. Frankenstein: You should have expected that, doctor. They're always wet at first.

Dr. Ivanov: It looks like a deflated balloon.

Dr. Frankenstein: Yes, yes that's because it's made out of corpses! Stop telling me how ugly my creation is and help me get it on its feet.

(Dr. Frankenstein and Dr. Ivanov hoist the Monster off the table. It stumbles, then stands with the doctors' support. Dr. Frankenstein and Dr. Ivanov then release the Monster. After wavering slightly, it stands successfully.)

Dr. Frankenstein: Oh, my glorious creation. My beautiful, beautiful child. You shall brand the Frankenstein name over every scientific legacy to have once overshadowed it. You shall be a most impressive display, a most salient legacy...and a most horrific enemy. You see, there are several people who have wronged me greatly, and I want them, eh, for lack of a better term, killed.

(The Monster grunts.)

Dr. Frankenstein:

Ooh ho, I love that enthusiasm. Come now. I'll lead you to your first victim.

(Dr. Frankenstein, cackling with vindictive madness, exits with Dr. Ivanov and the Monster. Blackout.)

Scene 5 - Dr. Tesla's Lounge

(We open with Dr. Tesla resting in his cushioned chair, facing stage right while reading a newspaper, book, or magazine. The monitoring device rests on a table adjacent to the chair. Monster Moans offstage left)

Dr. Tesla: **(Hearing the sound)** Igor? Igor is that you?

(Monster moans once more)

Dr. Tesla: You know, Igor, if you want to have some more fun in the laboratory, just say so.

(Monster moans louder)

Dr. Tesla: Don't worry: I'm not too tired. I have energy for a few more experiments.

(Monster moans grow louder)

Dr. Tesla: Why are you taking so long, Igor? Are you worried the neighbours will hear us or something?

(Monster moans grow to a crescendo as the Monster breaks into Dr. Tesla's mansion from upstage left.)

Dr. Tesla: **(Still reading)** Well, maybe with the racket you're making, they will.

(The Monster moves towards Dr. Tesla, placing a hand on his shoulder.)

Dr. Tesla: **(Looking only to the hand)** Wait a second...Igor, did you take some of my growth serum?

(The Monster's hand moves around Dr. Tesla's neck.)

Dr. Tesla: Oh, I didn't know we were trying this kind of experiment.

(The Monster's grip tightens.)

Dr. Tesla: **(Beginning to struggle for breath)** Now hold on a sec. That's taking things a little too far. **(Noticing the monitoring device)** Hang on...Igor's not even here.

(Looking up to the Monster, Dr. Tesla begins to scream. A struggle ensues, and the screams die down as Dr. Tesla is suffocated by the Monster. Dr. Frankenstein and Dr. Ivanov enter from upstage left.)

Dr. Frankenstein: Good riddance, labwrecker.

(Dr. Frankenstein begins to laugh at his own pun.)

Dr. Frankenstein: Labwrecker...That was pretty good, ja?

Dr. Ivanov: You're insufferable.

Dr. Frankenstein: Not as bad as Gunter though, right? Are you sure you don't want my monster to kill him?

Dr. Ivanov: Yes. Much like you and Igor's, our professional relationship isn't what it used to be. He's slobbish, lazy, and perpetually asinine. He's corroded my reputation and wronged me more than he has you, and I want to kill him my way.

Dr. Frankenstein: And what's your way?

(SFX. babbling monkeys offstage.)

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Dr. Ivanov: Well, would you listen to that? They're already here.

(Three crazed Monkey hybrids rush onstage.)

Dr. Ivanov: **(Approaching the Monkey Hybrids)** Ah, welcome my lovies. Dr. Frankenstein, I've told you about them before but I believe this is the first time you've met: these are *my* monsters.

(Dr. Frankenstein cautiously offers a hand to the Monkey hybrids, who look at it curiously.)

Dr. Frankenstein: How do you do?

(Monkey hybrid 1 pokes Dr. Frankenstein's hand, then erupts into a frenzy of babble. The others follow suit.)

Dr. Frankenstein: **(Leaping back in frightened shock)** Ah! **(As the Monkey hybrids' fit dies down)** Well, keep those...things away from my monster. I feel like they'd be a bad influence.

Dr. Ivanov: How so?

Dr. Frankenstein: Well, I don't know...There's just something a little off about them.

(As Dr. Frankenstein is talking, Monkey Hybrid 2 produces a prescription bottle and begins passing pills to the others. Following Dr. Frankenstein's gaze, Dr. Ivanov takes notice.)

Dr. Ivanov: Hey! No, no, bad! Put the opioids down this instant!

(The Monkey Hybrids bow their heads and look at Dr. Ivanov with ‘puppy-dog’ eyes.)

Dr. Ivanov: Now!

(Monkey Hybrid 2 throws the pills to the ground.)

Dr. Ivanov: **(Turning to Dr. Frankenstein)** See? They’re fine.

(Behind Dr. Ivanov, Monkey Hybrid 3 pulls out a knife, hisses, and runs at Dr. Ivanov—only to be held back by the others, who take the [prop] knife and throw it offstage.)

Dr. Ivanov: **(To Dr. Frankenstein)** What?

Dr. Frankenstein: It’s just that, one of your monsters was about to sta—

Dr. Ivanov: Don’t insult my babies. They’re good monsters.

Dr. Frankenstein: Alright, alright.

Dr. Ivanov: **(Taking notice of the monitoring device)** Oh, and would you look at that. A small blip labelled ‘Igor.’

Dr. Frankenstein: Where is he?

Dr. Ivanov: Looks like he’s at the local pub—and I wouldn’t doubt that Gunter’s with him.

Dr. Frankenstein: Ah, very gút, very gút.

Dr. Ivanov: Now, how about we go for a drink?

Dr. Frankenstein: Oh no, I shouldn’t drink anymore.

Dr. Ivanov: I mean, let’s go kill Igor and Gunter!

Dr. Frankenstein: Oh right, right, right.

(Dr. Frankenstein, Dr. Ivanov, the Monkey hybrids, and the Monster exit. Blackout.)

Scene 6 - Pub

(The pub. Igor and Gunter sit at the bar, the latter eating the last bits of stolen slime. The Barkeep stands across from them, yet again cleaning a glass. As the scene begins, the Barkeep takes notice of the audience.)

Barkeep: Oh, not you again!

Gunter: Hey, shut up with your hallucinations. I'm tellin' a story!

Igor: So then what happened?

Gunter: So I ran out, **(raising the beaker of slime)** took this, and came here. Didn't know what else to do, really. Everything happened so fast...Man, I did not know your partner was Frankenstein! Dr. Ivanov knows him really well. I feel kinda' bad, really.

Igor: Don't. I'm the one that decided to leave him...Was he really that sad about it?

Gunter: Well, what did you expect?

Igor: I don't know. I knew he'd take a hit...but I didn't think he'd be *that* devastated.

Barkeep: **(To audience)** Oop, that's my queue. **(To Igor)** Igor...**(suddenly angry)** how could you not think he'd be devastated?! You two were about to have a monster, of course he'd be devastated!

Gunter: Hey, stay outta' this.

Igor: Look, I wasn't ready for a monster!

Barkeep: Of course you weren't ready. But leaving your scientist because things became—eh, what's the oh so frightening word? Unpredictable?—is an act of utter cowardice. If you were truly committed to him and his work, you should have, at the very least, been willing to provide some real support.

Igor: But I thought we were just having fun! Alright? That's all I wanted! Is that so terrible?

Barkeep: Well, it is quite unfortunate, in my humble opinion. So often, laboratory partnerships are trivialised as little more than matters of fun. Heh, and look where that got you.

(Igor looks down into his cup.)

Gunter: Oh, get off your high altar.

Barkeep: Fine. It's time for my break anyway. **(To audience)** Don't follow me this time.

Gunter: Why would I—

Barkeep: I wasn't talking to you!

Gunter: Okay, okay. Scheiße.

(The Barkeep exits. A thud, grunt, and collapse are heard offstage.)

Igor: What was that?

Gunter: What was what?

Igor: Never mind.

Gunter: Anyway, don't listen to 'em, Igor. **(Mockingly)** "In my humble opinion," you didn't do anything wrong. It wasn't right of Frankenstein to throw you into this. He really should've talked to you first.

Igor: I suppose so.

(Dr. Frankenstein enters in the Barkeep's clothes.)

Gunter: You suppose so? Don't give me that crap, man. You know so. **(Noticing Dr. Frankenstein)** Hey, aren't you supposed to be on break or something?

Dr. Frankenstein: ...No.

Gunter: **(After a suspenseful pause)** Oh, okay. Anyways, Igor, you can't let 'Germany's Dr. Phil' over there get you down. Frankenstein's just crazy. I mean, dropping all this on you without warning?

Igor: Who's Dr. Phil?

Gunter: Never mind that. The point is, Frankenstein's crazy and you were right to leave 'em.

Igor: I guess you're right.

Gunter: Don't guess. I am right. Alright? I am right.

Igor: Sure.

Gunter: Oh come on, say it. Dr. Frankenstein's crazy.

(Igor mutters "Dr. Frankenstein's crazy" under his breath.)

Gunter: Come on, say it louder. Dr. Frankenstein's crazy!

Igor: Dr. Frankenstein's crazy.

Dr. Frankenstein: **(Revealing himself)** No, louder man!

Igor: Dr. Frankenstein's crazy! Wait!

Dr. Frankenstein: Now, Monster!

(The Monster crashes through the wall of the pub. Gunter falls from his chair in surprise.)

Dr. Frankenstein: And all this crazy, Igor, will be your death!

Igor: W-wha...

Dr. Frankenstein: What, surprised to see me here? Fully functional, despite your absence? **(Gesturing to the Monster)** Or, are you more surprised to see my glorious creation?

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(Gunter begins to crawl towards the pub exit. The Monster grabs a nearby chair or stool and smashes it on the ground.)

Dr. Frankenstein: And what a healthy monster it is, too.

Igor: Victor, I—

Dr. Frankenstein: You're what? You're sorry? Now that your life is being threatened? Well, I'm afraid there's no more time for grovelling apologies.

Igor: Look Frankenstein...please. I know I messed up. I know I didn't handle things as well as I could have. I was just...scared.

Dr. Ivanov: **(Entering from the pub exit, just as Gunter was about to reach it)** Oh, you were scared? Please. You left because you're a snivelling idiot who didn't know how to properly serve his master—**(looking to Gunter)** just like my minion here.

Gunter: What? Dr. Ivanov, what are you saying?

Dr. Ivanov: Don't be ridiculous now, Gunter. You know very well how inept you've been as a servant.

Gunter: Master, I beg—

(Monkey noises are heard offstage.)

Dr. Ivanov: Begging might work on me eventually. But it'll do nothing to abate them.

(Dr. Ivanov steps aside as the Monkey Hybrids pile in through the pub exit. They dart past Dr. Ivanov and Gunter, smashing bottles, plates, and chairs.)

Dr. Ivanov: Monkeys!

(The Monkey hybrids stop.)

Dr. Ivanov: Kill Gunter.

Gunter: You're psychotic!

(The Monkey Hybrids begin to close in around Gunter.)

Igor: Frankenstein! Please stop this! I know I messed up. I really messed up. But killing Gunter and I isn't going to help anything!

Dr. Frankenstein: Enough. Monster, kill Igor.

(The Monster begins to move towards Igor. Igor and Gunter continue to yell things such as "Please!" and "No!" Eventually, they both scream...)

Igor: **(Together)** Stop!

Gunter: **(Together)** Stop!

(The Monster and the Monkey hybrids stop.)

Dr. Ivanov: What? No, don't stop!

Dr. Frankenstein: Kill him!

(The Monster and the Monkey hybrids begin advancing again.)

Igor: **(Realisation dawning)** No...stop!

Gunter: Y-yeah, what he said.

(The Monster and the Monkey hybrids stop. Both seem confused.)

Dr. Frankenstein: **(To Dr. Ivanov)** What is going on here? **(To the Monster)** I am your creator! I command you to kill Igor!

Igor: And...and I am your creator as well! I command you to **(gulps)** not kill Igor, please.

(The Monster and the Monkey hybrids look back and forth between their respective creators.)

Dr. Frankenstein: Kill him!

Igor: No, don't kill him!

Dr. Ivanov: Do it!

Gunter: No, please!

Dr. Frankenstein: Come on already! I'm the one who built the contraption that brought you into this world! And I went through the painstaking process of operating it!

Igor: Ah, but I...but I...eh. Oh! I inserted the lightning rod into the machine!

Dr. Ivanov: Oh shut up, that's not the same thing!

Gunter: **(Standing up)** No, the painstaking process we had to go through was dealing with your incessant complaining throughout the entire project!

Dr. Ivanov: Why you insolent, little—

(A rancour of insults and complaining ensues. The Monster and the Monkey hybrids look confused and frightened. The former begins to tear up as the latter audibly cry. Eventually, the Barkeep enters, clutching his head and wearing nothing but undergarments [preferably of a humorous fashion, such as heart-patterned boxers paired with an undershirt], and climbs atop the bar.)

Barkeep: *Enough!*

(Everyone falls silent.)

Barkeep: Now everyone quit your bickering for just a moment and let's take a long look at the situation! It is one thing for you to fight. Alright? That's fine. But it is wholly another for you to selfishly drag your monsters into this! How could you so willingly use them as tools in your vindictive struggles for needless and, quite plainly, idiotic revenge?! Huh?! Don't like each other anymore? Fine! But you damn well better work together to make sure that these monsters have the best lives you can give them!

(Pause)

Dr. Frankenstein: But...It's not fair! He should've been there when I needed him.

Igor: And you should have told me you were planning to have a monster!

Gunter: Oh mein güte! Can you two shut up already?

(Everyone looks at Gunter, surprised.)

Dr. Ivanov: Really, Gunter? You, of all people? I would have expected you to—

Gunter: Look, I'm just tired of this. Of all this. I'm still on Igor's side because...well, because he's my friend. But, Dr. Ivanov, I'm...I'm disturbed—

Dr. Ivanov: Oh, that's a big word for you.

Gunter: Shut up! I'm disturbed that you'd so easily turn your back on me like this. I don't know...Maybe it's made me feel a little bad for Victor over here. **(Turning to Dr. Frankenstein)** I'm sorry, is what I'm trying to say. Getting involved in your and Igor's business...it wasn't my place.

Dr. Ivanov: Ah, spare me! You're just saying that so you can get outta' this. Well, let me tell you now, you aren't!

Gunter: Maybe not, **(gesturing to the Monkey hybrids)** but they are.

Dr. Ivanov: Excuse me?

Gunter: Yeah, that's right! I'm taking custody of the monkey-people!

Dr. Ivanov: Oh no you're not! You know you couldn't suffice as their care-taker.

Barkeep: He'd be far better than you.

Dr. Ivanov: Really? If anything, he's been an example of utter irresponsibility to my creations. It's his lack of motivation and his constant drinking that's made the monkeys the druggies they are.

Barkeep: Yes, yes, yes: he's quite the slob, and that's probably had an effect. But there's far more to the story than your superficial account. These monkey-hybrids don't have an inkling of responsibility because your unwillingness to observe their faults constantly deprives them of it! In your mind, they can do no wrong and neither can you. Their inadequacies are a result of your partner's: not anything under the purview of their agency, and certainly not anything that can be attributed to you. In fact, I'd say you can't bear the thought of *your creations* choosing to act badly on their own, or the idea that you've been a poor caretaker to them, and so you put every particle of blame on your partner!

(Pause)

Dr. Ivanov: Who the hell are you?!

Barkeep: I'm a barkeep with hallucinations about being an incidental character who's been made self-aware for the sake of social commentary! And as such, I won't stand idly by and let you use your creations as a tool in some sick mode of self-promotion!

Dr. Ivanov: Fine then! If my worth as a scientist comes down to how well I can discipline my hybrids, I'll be the most stern, ruthless, and uncompromising

master I can be! **(Turning to the Monkey-hybrids)** You hear that? Every time you lot act out, every time you disobey my orders or tarnish my reputation, you'll be punished. Whether it's isolation from your siblings, hard labour, or just a good beating to remind you who's boss, I'll make sure you don't stain my legacy.

Barkeep: ...That...is not what I said.

(The Monkey hybrids look towards one another, then turn to Dr. Ivanov and begin to act aggressively.)

Dr. Ivanov: What are you doing? Monkeys, stop that this instant and get back to killing Gunter!

(The Monkey hybrids approach Dr. Ivanov.)

Dr. Ivanov: No. Nooooo. Bad monkeys! Gunter, call them off!

Gunter: Hey, they're grown Monkey People. I don't think I can deter them at this point.

Dr. Ivanov: Gunter!

(The Monkey hybrids leap at Dr. Ivanov, who manages to duck out of the way. The Monkey hybrids then chase Dr. Ivanov out through the pub exit.)

Gunter: And good riddance!

Barkeep: **(To the audience)** Well, I tried guys.

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Dr. Frankenstein: **(After a contemplative pause)**...Monster, come here.

(The Monster, wiping tears from its face, walks to Dr. Frankenstein.)

Dr. Frankenstein: **(After a pause)** I...I'm sorry for what I put you through. **(Gesturing to Igor)** That man, over there...is your creator...as much as I am. Maybe it's just the chemicals I dropped out back getting to me...

Barkeep: The what now?

Dr. Frankenstein: But I want you to treat him with respect.

(The Monster nods. Dr. Frankenstein sighs, then looks to Igor.)

Dr. Frankenstein: I'm not ready to forgive you for what you've done, but **(looking to the Monster)** I love this experiment more than I hate you.

Igor: ...Yeah. I'll do what I can for you two. Probably from another laboratory. But I'll do what I can.

Dr. Frankenstein: **(Looks to the Monster again)** Thank you, Igor. Now come, Monster, let's go home.

(The Monster grunts and exits with Dr. Frankenstein.)

Gunter: Well, Igor, looks like we're unemployed.

Igor: Yeah.

(Gunter approaches Igor and slaps him on the back.)

Gunter: Nothing left to do but look for some new work.

Igor: ...I guess.

Gunter: ...Come on, let's get outta' here.

(Igor and Gunter exit. The Barkeep remains alone onstage.)

Barkeep: **(After a contemplative sigh)** Ya' done what ya' could nameless Barkeep. Ya' done what ya' could. **(To the audience)** Anyways, are you satisfied now? Can you stop staring, please? No? Okay. Well, I hope you're satisfied. Lab-partner troubles are always interesting to watch, you know...from a distance. Things can end up poorly if you try to offer too much advice and get a little too involved.

(A shelf near the back of the wrecked pub collapses.)

Barkeep: Well, scheiße.

END