

That evening, I returned to our modest abode. It was a moment I had dreaded all day, yet irresistibly and inevitably it had come. I would have to give my dear wife the wicked news.

“Elizabeth, my sweet, I have returned.”

I entered the bedroom where she, recently stricken with a nauseous malady, lay among the sheets and pillows.

“Tell me of your day, my Victor.”

“Dear Elizabeth...I have truly awful tidings.”

“What is the matter?”

“I presented today to the Research Assessment Committee.”

“So you told me this morning. What of the outcome?”

I clenched my hands into fists, and for a moment was unable to speak. “Dearest Elizabeth...the miserable *wretches*, they – they have terminated my degree candidature at the University. I have two weeks to depart.”

“Oh, my God!” She put her hands to her mouth in shock. “What shall you do?”

“I know not.”

“Can you apply for a research grant from the SATW?”

“I have already done so.” I stared at the floor. “But I fear my chances are rare.”

“You must tell Father!”

I shook my head. “Father has endured too much wretchedness by far. With Mother gone and such grief from William...No, I will not burden him further.”

Elizabeth was for moments lost in thought. “Victor,” said she at last, “it is difficult for me to suggest, but I know of no other course. Perhaps you should seek Henry’s assistance.”

“Henry?” I spat the name. As children, Henry Clerval and I had been the closest of friends, but our relationship had soured in adulthood. For years, we have had no connexion. “He will not help me! Of that I am certain.”

“But how certain can you be if you do not even ask?” Elizabeth regarded me with imploring sadness. “Please, Victor. Go to Henry.”

She gazed upon me with her cloudless blue eyes, the moulding of her face expressing utter sensibility and sweetness. I had never been able to resist for long my wife’s entreaties, and that night was no exception. On the morrow, I resolved to make the journey to Basel and seek my old friend.

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# We Shall Be Monsters

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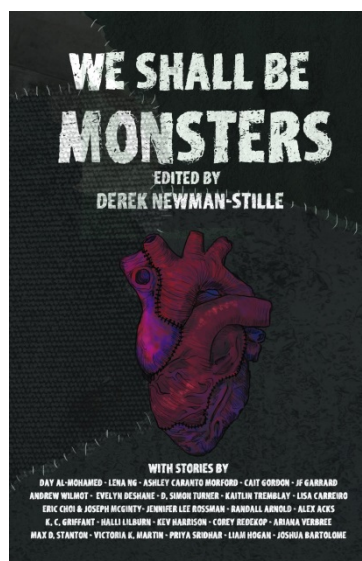
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Edited by multiple Prix Aurora Award winner [Derek Newman-Stille](#) and published by [Renaissance Press](#), *We Shall Be Monsters* commemorates the bicentennial and legacy of the ground-breaking and genre-changing novel *Frankenstein: Or, the Modern Prometheus* by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley. *We Shall Be Monsters* features twenty-four stories and poems by diverse authors from around the world, ranging from direct interpretations of Shelley's text to innovative explorations of stitched, assembled body, and narrative experiments in monstrous creations.

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