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The Frankenstein Monster Show

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A Samuel French Acting Edition

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FOUNDED 1830

SAMUELFRENCH-LONDON.CO.UK
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ISBN 978-0-573-08057-9

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CHARACTERS

A Corpse
Igor, a manservant
Mrs Beatrice Body, the housekeeper
John B. Good, a solicitor
Frank Enstein
Boris
Willie Burke } undertakers
Willie Hare }
Mrs Leucretia Burkenhare, their wife
Dr Ruby Watson
Sherlock Holmes, Junior
Firing Squad Officer
American Tourists
Police Inspector
Myriad Monsters

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT I

1	**Overture**	Orchestra
2	**Spooky Incidental**	Orchestra
3a–e	**Discords—Revealing of Monsters**	Orchestra
4	**Humanoid Boogie**	Corpse and Monsters
5	**Enstein's the Name**	Frank
6	**Spooky Incidental**	Orchestra
7	**Sting—Thinks!**	Orchestra
8	**Every Home Should Have a Happy Healthy Monster**	Frank, Igor, Mrs Body and Boris
9	**Every Home Should Have a Happy Healthy Monster** (Reprise)	Frank, Igor, Mrs Body, Burke, Hare and Mrs Burkenhare
10a	**Shimmer**	Orchestra
10b	**Can This Be Love?**	John and Ruby
11	**Soft Funereal Incidental**	Orchestra
12	**I'm Only Monstrous**	Boris
13a	**New Technology—Dramatic chord**	Orchestra
13b	**Activation—tremolo,** continuing under dialogue	Orchestra
13c	**Total Built-in Control**	Frank and Monsters
14	**There Must Be a Way**	Company

ACT II

15	**Business Is Big**	Mrs Burkenhare, Mrs Body, Igor and Monsters
16	**Business Was Small**	Igor and Mrs Body
17	**Elementary**	Sherlock
18a	**Spooky Incidental**	Orchestra
18b	**Gaily, Daily, Dealing Out Death**	Burke and Hare
19	**Put Your Head Upon the Block**	Tourists, Burke, Hare, Igor and Mrs Body
20	**Chase Incidental**	Orchestra
21	**Shall I Ever See My Love Again?**	John and Ruby
22	**This Is My Way to Make a Man**	Mrs Burkenhare
23	**Finale Medley**	Company

PRODUCTION NOTES

The style of playing required for this show is broad but sincere. Each character should entirely believe in him or herself, but be played with a good deal of relish so that it is just that much larger than life and achieves a kind of cartoon quality. Any tendency to over-indulgence must be avoided, though, since it will only slacken the pace and that should never be less than brisk.

Corpse Only a small part but one needing considerable authority. The character displays something of the dedication of the fanatic.

Igor A confirmed traditionalist who, though obviously old and querulous, can also be surprisingly lively.

Mrs Body A comfortable old soul, but with a few sharp edges; she is also slightly inclined towards hypochondria. She provides a natural foil for **Igor**'s quainter qualities.

John B. Good An innocent who tries hard and means well. If that sounds too damning he should also have a naïve kind of charm which appeals not only to **Ruby**, but also the audience.

Frank Enstein An American dynamo. His outlook is not so much evil as blinkered—he has a single-minded devotion to a single idea. He should also have great sex appeal, of which he is entirely unaware.

Boris He should look as alike as possible to the Boris Karloff model and just as frightening. His nature, though, is benign for, whatever qualities were inherent in his component parts, malice was not one of them. However, like a child, he can be subject to tantrums, which are fiery but short-lived.

Burke and **Hare** A couple of endearing idiots who happen to be Irish—but only because the original Burke and Hare were. Essentially a twosome and essentially henchmen. **Burke** is the cleverer of the pair—or at least thinks he is. **Hare** does not think about it—or anything else much.

Mrs Burkenhare A voluptuous seductress with two interests in her life, money and sex—in that order. Clever and sophisticated, she is the business brains behind the organization and always has an eye to the main chance.

Dr Ruby Watson Very attractive, but with a briskness often associated with doctors. This gives her a practical, no-nonsense approach to life—until she meets **John**. Her reaction to him is entirely irrational; but then falling in love is.

Sherlock Holmes Junior He has tried to acquire all his famous forebear's attributes in an obsessive attempt to outdo him. He is thwarted in this ambition by only one thing—he's a fool. So, convinced of his genius, he invariably grasps the wrong end of every stick that life proffers.

Monsters There can be as many as are available and desirable for any given production. Sex and colour are immaterial, the only essential is that they should always look like monsters with the exception of the **Police**—and that can be achieved by make-up and a uniformity of stilted and awkward movement.

Staging

The directions in the script assume a tab surround, with a curtained alcove upstage (which ideally should be raised), and a set of traverse tabs to help ensure swift and unobtrusive scene changes. Into this basic setting doorways, furniture and dressing can be fitted as required. The various signs flown in will only need very shallow flying space. Their use not only conveys information—such as a change of locale—but can also contribute to the cartoon quality mentioned earlier.

The foregoing is only intended as a suggestion of one, fairly simple, way to present the show, but imaginative directors can, of course, develop any other ideas that best suit their available resources.

Certain items perhaps need special mention:

Trick Coffin A frame constructed in conventional coffin shape with hardboard panels attached, apart from the upstage panel to allow the **Corpse** to slip out. The space is covered on the inside of the coffin with black material tacked to the top of the frame. The coffin can be doubled for use in Act I, Scene 3.

Prop Corpse As nearly as possible a life-size facsimile of the actor. It is preset under him.

Machine A simple box shape which can be made of flats cleeted or pin-hinged together. Suitable dials, switches, levers and lights (practical) are fitted on to it. It needs an opening at either end and to be set so that characters can enter it unseen from offstage. The onstage opening could be covered with a metal strip curtain.

Four-legged, No-headed, No-armed Monster Two false legs stick up in the air from a covered frame which represents half an upside-down torso. It fits over the head and on to the shoulders of the actor concerned, whose arms go into the legs to operate them. A gauze panel must be inserted at eye level.

Electric Chair A solid, square-shaped wooden chair, fitted with wrist and ankle straps, wire coils, tube lights and a lever.

Execution Axe The head is shaped out of thick foam rubber.

Guillotine A frame with grooved sides in which a wedge-shaped blade can ride up and down. The blade can be made of painted hardboard or aluminium sheet attached to a bar, in the centre of which is a rope running over a pulley at the top of the frame. The bottom of the blade's descent is hidden by the screen.

Shots It may well be difficult to get licences for sufficient blank rifles and pistols, so we have listed each salvo in the Effects Plot to give the noise required.

ACT I

Music 1: Overture

SCENE 1

Enstein Hall

On a darkened stage the traverse tabs are closed. In front of them is a table on which a trick coffin is set (see Production Notes)

Music 2: Spooky Incidental

The music is rather spooky and is accompanied by howling wind and general storm effects. A Spot comes up on the coffin. Slowly the lid rises—so does an ancient Corpse

Corpse Good-evening. I'm dead. How are you? I haven't always been dead, of course. No, no! And if I wasn't dead now I could bring myself to life again. Because I made a great discovery—how to create life! I made a man, perfect in every detail——

Music 3a: Dramatic Discord

A Spot comes up R *on a typical Frankenstein Monster, with bolts and stitching*

Well almost. And where I've led, others will follow. Where I made one, they'll make two——

Music 3b: Discord

A Spot comes up on two Monsters L

Or three——

Music 3c: Discord

A Spot comes up on a third Monster L

Or more!

Music 3d: Discord

A Spot comes up on a fourth Monster L

More I said, not four! Lots more!

Music 3e: Discord

Lights up on as many Monsters as can be mustered

Thank you. And all walking, talking, just like you!

Music 4: Humanoid Boogie

The Monsters spring into life when the music starts

(*Singing*) Eat, drink, breathe, think,
Run, hop, lean, blink.
The Humanoid Boogie's
Coming home to roost.
Jump, stride, squirm, walk,
Shout, scream, nod, talk,
It's really something else,
It's gonna be a hoot.

Monsters Going,
We want to dance and sing.
Dancing,
We're not an awful thing.
We've come alive and we're feeling new,
We're walking, talking, just like you, just like you.

All Walking, talking, walking, talking,
Just like you, just like you.
Walking, talking, walking, talking,
Just like you, just like you.
Humanoid, Humanoid Boogie, Humanoid, Humanoid Boogie,
Humanoid, Humanoid Boogie, Humanoid.
Humanoid, Humanoid Boogie, Humanoid, Humanoid Boogie,
Humanoid, Humanoid Boogie, Humanoid.

Kick, prance, look, glance,
Skip, trot, sigh, dance,
Frankenstein Monsters
Celebrate in style.
Knock, chat, bend, tap,
Sit, lie, wish, rap,
It's really something else
Now we've come alive.

Going,
We want to dance and sing,
Dancing,
We're not an awful thing.

We've come alive and we're feeling new,
We're walking, talking, just like you, just like you.
Walking, talking, walking, talking,
Just like you, just like you.
Walking, talking, walking, talking,
Just like you, just like you.
Humanoid, Humanoid Boogie, Humanoid, Humanoid Boogie,
Humanoid, Humanoid Boogie, Humanoid.
Humanoid, Humanoid Boogie, Humanoid, Humanoid Boogie,
Humanoid, Humanoid Bookie, Humanoid.
Humanoid, Humanoid Boogie, Humanoid, Humanoid Boogie,
Humanoid, Humanoid Boogie, Humanoid.

The Monsters disappear as the Lights fade and the music dies away

The single spot is left on the coffin and the Corpse climbs back into it

Corpse Ah, not yet, not yet. All just a dead man's dream. Or is it . . .?

He lowers the lid and the Spot fades to Black-out. The Corpse gets out of the back of the coffin and exits unseen as the traverse tabs open

Lightning flash and a loud crack of thunder

The Lights come up as Igor, an ancient retainer, totters on from L *with a candle*

The décor revealed should suggest a heavy Victorian Gothic interior. There is a door L, *a front door* R *and a curtained alcove* UC. *More lightning and thunder*

Igor Ah, what a lovely night!

Mrs Beatrice Body enters L, *working hard at trying to feel a pain in her back*

Mrs Body Lovely? It's not lovely for my twinges. It brings them on. You wouldn't think it was lovely if you had my twinges.
Igor Well, I haven't, so I do. Lovely.

More lightning and thunder. He looks hopefuly at the coffin

Enough to wake the dead.
Mrs Body Twaddle. Just wishful thinking, Igor.
Igor Maybe, but I remember another night like this. Another night when the old master——
Mrs Body He's not the old master now, he's the dead master. So we must prepare for the new one. He may be here any minute. You heard what the lawyer told us just now in the library.
Igor Lawyer? That young—young——
Mrs Body Exactly. Young Mr Good, of Good, Better and Best.
Igor And why can't we have old Mr Good, like we always used to?
Mrs Body Because he's dead, too.

Igor I don't care, he should have been here. Shows more respect. But that young whipper-snapper just talked a lot of rubbish. All that stuff about the new Mr Enstein.

Mrs Body What, about him being old Mr E.'s great-great-nephew and only surviving relative?

Igor No, no, the other bit. About him being born in America. I mean, fancy letting himself be born in America. And then all that rigmarole about being a commuter expert in rheumatics.

Mrs Body Not commuter—computer. And it wasn't rheumatics, it was robotics.

Igor Same thing. Lot of new-fangled nonsense. Robotics, huh! What are robotics, anyway?

Mrs Body Something to do with making robots, of course. You know, sort of man-made men.

Igor Man-made men! You mean, like . . .? (*He nods his head vigorously upstage*)

Mrs Body No robots are machines, not at all like . . . (*She nods her head upstage equally vigorously*)

Igor Shall we tell the new master about . . .? (*He nods upstage even more vigorously*)

Mrs Body No! Not yet, anyway.

Igor Well, of course not yet. He's not here yet.

There is a loud knocking at the front door R

Both He is!

Mrs Body The new master!

Igor At the door!

Both Knocking!

John B. Good enters L, *carrying a briefcase*

John I say . . .

Igor (*very frigidly*) Yes, Mr Good?

John Isn't there someone at the door?

Igor Possibly.

The knocking increases. Igor opens the door to reveal Frank Enstein

Yes.

He shuts the door, but Frank thrusts it open, knocking Igor aside, and enters

Frank Hi. Enstein's the name. Frank Enstein.

Lightning, thunder

Music 5: Enstein's the Name

(*Singing*) I'm a scientist it's true,
I study ions, molecules,
I have means to study genes
And I follow Newton's rules.

I know I'm on to something big!
I have researched protozoa,
Roamin' through the haemoglobin,
For a form of life that's lower.

I know of chromium and cadmium,
Samarium and helium,
Polonium, potassium,
Tellurium and caesium—
It's really elementary.
Frank Enstein's the name
And I'm from the USA,
From research in DNA.

I have scoured many books,
I have studied many topics,
No illusions re conclusions,
There's a future in robotics.
I know I'm on to something big!
I have researched protozoa,
Roamin' through the haemoglobin,
For a form of life that's lower, lower, lower, lower, lower.

I know of chromium and cadmium . . . *etc.*

I'm a scientist it's true,
Let me know of any queries,
Conclusions or illusions
Concerning Enstein's theories.
I know I'm on to something big!
I have researched protozoa,
Roamin' through the haemoglobin,
For a form of life that's lower, lower, lower, lower, lower.

I know of chromium and cadmium . . . *etc.*

OK. You caught the name? Enstein. Frank Enstein.

Lightning, thunder

Is the weather always this bad round here?

Igor Of course! It would be!

Frank What, the weather?

Igor No, your first name, sir. Frank. All the male Ensteins have been called Frank, ever since . . .

John Really? Ever since when?

Igor Ah, lost in the mists of time.

Mrs Body So are you, you old fool. Rambling on when we should be welcoming Mr Enstein.

John Quite right, Mrs Body. I'm John B. Good, Mr Enstein.

Frank Great to know you, John. (*He pumps John's hand vigorously*)

John Ooh! Aah! Yes, thank you. (*He retrieves his hand and finds it rather limp*) Great-er-pleasure. I'm your solicitor.

Frank Solici—? Oh, my attorney—sure. And who's this little guy?
John That little guy is—I mean, that is Igor. And this is Mrs Body.
Mrs Body Mrs Beatrice Body, sir. (*She bobs a curtsy*) Your housekeeper.
Frank Housekeeper? Gee, that's tough, Beattie baby.
Mrs Body (*startled, but pleased*) Beattie baby!
Frank 'Cos you're not gonna have a house to keep. I'm selling the place.
Mrs Body What!
Igor Selling Enstein Hall!
John But why? What for?
Frank Money. I aim to start my own business making computerized robots. And that takes bread—a lot of bread.
John But you've got—er—bread. All of old Mr Enstein's—bread. Oodles of it.
Frank That's great because I'm no business man, I'm a scientist, but a good one—what I don't know about computerized robot systems isn't worth knowing. In time I'll conquer the world—and nothing and nobody's gonna stop me. But I have to get started and to do that I can't have too much bread. So the house—it goes. Fix it for me, John.
John Well, if you really . . . of course, but——
Frank And soon. Like tomorrow, maybe.
John T-tomorrow?
Frank (*leading him to the front door*) Yeah, now before you go——
John Go?
Frank Sure, to get started. There's just one small detail——how much have I been left? You said there was——?
John Oodles.
Frank Great, but what's the going rate for an oodle?
John Ah, the precise amount. Er—wouldn't you rather I told you confidentially?
Frank OK. Confidentially. Whisper.
John (*shrugging then getting out some papers*) It's a little complicated. You see, there's . . . (*He whispers*)

Frank gives increasingly pleased reactions during John's speech, which should only be a background to Mrs Body's and Igor's dialogue

And then there's . . . (*he whispers*). But not forgetting . . . (*he whispers*). Oh, and I almost did forget—where is it now? Ah, yes. (*He whispers*) Which, together with . . . (*he whispers*). So, all in all, and allowing for death duties, of course, it'll be something in the region of . . . (*he whispers*).

Mrs Body Igor, what are we to do? What's to become of us?
Igor Never mind us. What about . . .? (*He nods upstage*)
Mrs Body Oh yes, what about . . .? (*She nods upstage*)
Igor All that work . . . all that knowledge, it mustn't be wasted. Ah, maybe . . . he said he's a scientist—it's worth a try—we'll show him the notebook!
Mrs Body The notebook! Yes! Where is it? There?