

MAD SCIENTIST PLAY

Eddie Kohler

Cast

MUMFORD VOLLERTINSKY, the MAD SCIENTIST

IGOR

MURIEL PILSNER, president of the college

BRAD, PRESIDENT PILSNER's husband

The FRANKENSTEIN, a young, sweet-looking girl

Setting: The Mad Scientist's lab, Gibbler College, Lameburg, Vermont

The characters are mostly who you would think they would be. Igor is a hunchback, for instance.

Scene I — Wednesday MAD SCIENTIST *and* IGOR

MAD SCIENTIST. Well, Igor, it's been five years since I moved to this provincial backwater in search of a quiet, supportive base from which to launch my investigation into the depths of the human spirit. And what results have I discovered? What questions have I answered? What conventional wisdom have I demolished? What secret doors into the recesses of the human brain have I unlocked?

IGOR. None, sir.

MAD SCIENTIST. That's right. And do you know why?

IGOR. Because your instruments are poor, your methods are shoddy, your motivation is quixotic, your tactics are questionable, your goals are fuzzy, your ideas are absurd, your funding is minimal, your colleagues are backstabbers, and your arthritis is acting up.

MAD SCIENTIST. Right again. My heart is a mass of scar tissue whose occasional forlorn beats serve only to circulate spiritual pain throughout my body along with the black, treacly water that once was my blood.

IGOR. Thank God your illicit sex with the president's husband is so steamy hot.

MAD SCIENTIST. Life-affirming, yes. It does get one up in the morning.

IGOR. And the afternoon.

MAD SCIENTIST. And sometimes the evening.

IGOR. And thank God you still have one faithful assistant.

MAD SCIENTIST. That I do, Igor, and I love you for it.

IGOR. This isn't just your fifth anniversary at Gibbler College, you know. This is our tenth anniversary together.

MAD SCIENTIST. Not ten years, Igor, be kind to an old man's heart! Oh, I should have got champagne.

IGOR. I've got something even bubblier. I've got results.

MAD SCIENTIST. Not the perceptual timestream distorter!

IGOR. The very thing. (*presents a device*)

MAD SCIENTIST. Oh, sweet device! Locus of my lifedreams! The technology that birthed you will engender others, devices upon devices, ever more powerful, a geometrically expanding series of devices that will shake the very foundations of humanity's perceptual world! Yet how humble you seem; a dial, a lever, a glowing button. From such simple beginnings.

IGOR. I haven't tested it yet.

MAD SCIENTIST. Why not?

IGOR. There was this club that was just opening, you know.

MAD SCIENTIST. No matter; we'll test it now. If it fails, I've got gin at home. But what should we do?

IGOR. I'd like my birthday to be farther from Rosh Hashanah.

MAD SCIENTIST. Silly Igor. Let's pick something simpler. This day, Igor, when possibility opened before us; let us keep this day private, between the two of us. Let us manipulate perceptual time so that no one else in this godforsaken town will even remember that this day occurred.

IGOR. So tomorrow, they won't remember anything they did today?

MAD SCIENTIST. Or even that today existed.

IGOR. Why not.

(MAD SCIENTIST *twirls knob, pushes buttons*)

MAD SCIENTIST. Now brace yourself.

(MAD SCIENTIST *pulls a lever. Lights flicker. Pause. They look at one another. They look around. MAD SCIENTIST goes to the window, looks out. They look at one another. Pause. Blackout*)

Scene 2 — Thursday

MAD SCIENTIST and IGOR working

(BRAD *enters, sneaks up behind MAD SCIENTIST, covers his eyes*)

BRAD. Guess who.

MAD SCIENTIST. Where were you last night?

BRAD. Guess!

MAD SCIENTIST. I was worried sick.

BRAD. Guess!

MAD SCIENTIST. I can't see my experiment, it could release deadly gas at any moment.

BRAD. Guess, guess, guess, guess, guess, guess, guess, guess, (*etc.*)

MAD SCIENTIST (*overlapping*). I don't guess, I experiment. Let's see; I could cut off your hand for the fingerprints, draw some blood to narrow it down by type —

IGOR. President Pilsner!

BRAD. Oh God. (*he hides in the reagent cabinet*)

PRESIDENT PILSNER (*sweeping in*). Dr. Vollertinsky. Igor.

MAD SCIENTIST. Good afternoon, Muriel.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. How go the experiments.

MAD SCIENTIST. Oh, this and that.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Forthcoming as always. You are a true scientist. Lord knows why this university continues to fund you and your crackpot theories, but the board of overseers is in control of that, not me. Despite it all I find you charming.

MAD SCIENTIST. You flatter me.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Perhaps you should investigate that mystery of the human spirit. Why I should find *you* charming. I was looking for my husband.

MAD SCIENTIST. Your husband?

PRESIDENT PILSNER. My husband Brad. I believe you share more than a passing acquaintance.

MAD SCIENTIST. Oh, your husband. Yes. Well. No.

IGOR. I saw him running down the street in that direction.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Running?

IGOR. Yes. He looked —

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Nervous? Upset? Confused? Out of breath? Ordinary?

IGOR. Busy.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Mind if I look over your reagents, Mumford?

MAD SCIENTIST. I don't know why you'd want to, Muriel. Just bottles and cans. And old rotten food. And poisonous spiders.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Well, I'll just go ahead and look then.

(*As she reaches for the door, IGOR lights self on fire, or pretends to*)

IGOR. Aagh! Fire! Fire! Help me! Oh, it burns! (*etc.*)

MAD SCIENTIST. Igor! God! Muriel, quick! Get him to the fire shower!

PRESIDENT PILSNER. The fire shower? Where is it! Where's the fire shower!

MAD SCIENTIST (*picking up a bucket*). Look out!

(MAD SCIENTIST *throws the bucket of water at IGOR, loses his grip. Water and bucket hit IGOR. IGOR groans, falls, hits the ground, half-sits up, winks broadly at MAD SCIENTIST, falls back*)

MAD SCIENTIST. There. No harm done?

IGOR. Oh, thank you, sir. Thank you for saving me. And Madam President, thank you for your support.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. My responsibility extends to all the fellows of this great college. I'm sure you want time to recover from your ordeal. Mumford, later. And if you see Brad, you are not to touch him, do you hear? He's mine. (*leaves*)

BRAD (*from inside the cabinet*). You never guessed who it was.

MAD SCIENTIST. Brad.

BRAD (*coming out*). Spot on!

(*They kiss passionately*)

MAD SCIENTIST (*to IGOR*). Let me help you up. Well done, sir.

IGOR. Oh, tsk.

MAD SCIENTIST. Now, where were you last night?

BRAD. Last night I spent in your bed riding you like a thoroughbred.

MAD SCIENTIST. You did nothing of the sort.

BRAD. Don't play with my head. It's not part of our contract.

MAD SCIENTIST. Brad, I spent last night cold and lonely and I must know why.

BRAD. Last night I cooked you risotto with sun-dried tomatoes, pesto, and mushrooms a la king. After watching *Nature* on PBS, I took you to your room and —

MAD SCIENTIST. Yes, yes, that was Tuesday.

BRAD. That's right, yesterday.

MAD SCIENTIST. Yesterday was Wednesday.

BRAD. What's Wednesday?

MAD SCIENTIST. What's today?

BRAD. Today is Thursday.

IGOR. And what day comes before Thursday?

BRAD. Tuesday.

MAD SCIENTIST. And what day comes after Tuesday?

BRAD. Thursday.

IGOR. How many days are there in a week?

BRAD. Six.

MAD SCIENTIST and IGOR. Eureka!

MAD SCIENTIST. Complications.

BRAD. What's Wednesday?

IGOR. Do you think this effect will last forever?

MAD SCIENTIST. Perhaps. Or perhaps next week he'll snap back to reality.

IGOR. So everyone in Lameburg believes —

MAD SCIENTIST. That there are six days in the week, yes.

IGOR. But what did these people do on Wednesday?

BRAD. What's Wednesday?

MAD SCIENTIST. Obviously a question for further work. Let's investigate the completeness of the perceptual modification. Brad.

BRAD. Yes, hon?

MAD SCIENTIST. Tell me about the TV show *Law and Order*.

BRAD. Oh, I love that show. Sam Waterston in a rabid lather. That's great television.

IGOR. So he remembers Wednesday events.

MAD SCIENTIST. Precisely. And do we watch *Law and Order* together?

BRAD. Yes, when we can.

MAD SCIENTIST. And on which day do we watch *Law and Order*?

BRAD. Why, on Thursday.

IGOR. No, that's *Law and Order: Special Victims Unit*.

BRAD. Oh yes, thank you Igor. Well, then, on Sunday.

MAD SCIENTIST. That's the reruns. When do we watch the new shows?

BRAD. The new shows. Hmm.

(BRAD *thinks. Long pause. Then his eyes roll back into his head and he faints*)

IGOR. Cognitive dissonance. His mind's locked up.

MAD SCIENTIST. Fantastic. The perceptual timestream distorter is successful beyond our wildest dreams.

IGOR. So its core, the Brain-o-vac —

MAD SCIENTIST. We can duplicate it. Mass-produce it. And finally, you and I, Igor, can boldly experiment with the last frontier of the human mind. The secret garden, the mysterious, mist-covered valley, the untouchable core. Emotions!

IGOR. O glorious day!

PRESIDENT PILSNER (*sweeping in*). I see you have found my husband.

MAD SCIENTIST. Muriel.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. And not only have you found him, you've killed him. Well done.

IGOR. He's not dead, he's fainted!

PRESIDENT PILSNER. I know that, scum beetle, I was exaggerating for effect. Explain yourself.

MAD SCIENTIST. He came in looking for you, just after you left, and spontaneously fainted. He must have been thinking of you.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. I didn't listen to a word you said.

MAD SCIENTIST. That's your prerogative.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. This will not stand, Mumford. Putting my husband in a coma is so stupid it's obscene. You will meet with me and the Board next week to discuss your lack of human decency. Expect to be fired. Eight o'clock sharp, in my office.

MAD SCIENTIST. Muriel, can't we discuss this privately? My work —

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Eight o'clock sharp. In my office. On — on — on Tuesday.

MAD SCIENTIST. On Tuesday.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Yes.

MAD SCIENTIST. Not Wednesday.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. What Wednesday, there is no Wednesday, you buffoon.

(MAD SCIENTIST *grabs a calendar, shows it to* PRESIDENT PILSNER *while pointing*)

at the Wednesday column)

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Y — g — p —

(PRESIDENT PILSNER *faints*)

MAD SCIENTIST (*to IGOR*). Help me get them outside.

IGOR. Outside where?

MAD SCIENTIST (*as they drag the bodies out*). Onto some bench in the park. We'll arrange them in a compromising position. Hopefully when they wake up this will all seem like a fantastic dream. Then back here to the distorter. As God is my witness, I will understand the human soul!

Scene 3 — Friday

MAD SCIENTIST, IGOR, PRESIDENT PILSNER, BRAD *in front of an apparatus and several containers of clear liquid*

MAD SCIENTIST. Madam Pilsner, I felt that given your memorandum, you should be here to witness the first test of our spirit transferometer.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Yes, Mumford, I'm flattered, yet taken aback. Carry on with your experiment, such as it is. What does it do.

MAD SCIENTIST. It creates nothing more and nothing less than the physical representation of the human spirit. Its core is our Brain-o-vac engine, an almost limitless prober, investigator, and manipulator of the perceptual and emotional parts of the human brain. Patent pending, and we have assigned the patent, and half of its ensuing profits, to the college.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Thoughtful.

MAD SCIENTIST. Here is the spirit matrix — a liquid aerogel designed by my able assistant Igor to take on human spiritual characteristics.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Such as?

IGOR. Mostly color.

MAD SCIENTIST. And many other things.

IGOR. But mostly color.

BRAD. So it would come out tan for me?

MAD SCIENTIST. No, no, spiritual color. The reflective and translucence properties of your personality, loves, hates, transmuted into the spirit matrix for a physicalization of your innermost being.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. A party trick, like the machines that measure your temperature and tell you how good a lover you are. The profit potential seems limitless. Mumford, this is a joke.

IGOR. Madam President, I misspoke! The matrix may also manifest mixability, tackiness, and viscosity properties.

MAD SCIENTIST. A psychotic's liquid might be explosive.

IGOR. A good man's might smell like roses.

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MAD SCIENTIST. A calm man's might not boil.

BRAD. A sexy man's might — be frothy?

IGOR. We don't know.

MAD SCIENTIST. We haven't tested. We wanted to give you the honor of witnessing the first run.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Fascinating and incomprehensible. But charming. Carry on.

IGOR. Then — we need a volunteer.

BRAD. I want to go first.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Bradley! Don't be ridiculous. Leave it to one of the morons.

BRAD. Muriel, pumpkin.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Bradley, I forbid it.

BRAD. It's safe, isn't it?

MAD SCIENTIST. Oh, perfectly. It doesn't take anything out of you. It measures your spirit and irradiates the liquid accordingly. There's not even any surgery required.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Bradley.

BRAD. Come on, my rootfandler.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Bradley.

BRAD. Pumpkin honey cheese knocker. Juggle candy baby. Poodlenut chocolate girl.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. All right. But make it quick.

MAD SCIENTIST. It only takes a moment. (*he begins to take BRAD to the apparatus*)

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Mumford!

MAD SCIENTIST. Yes?

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Igor can strap in my husband.

MAD SCIENTIST. Don't be ridiculous.

(IGOR straps BRAD to the apparatus as MAD SCIENTIST arranges one of the clear liquid containers)

MAD SCIENTIST. Now, Brad, close your eyes.

(MAD SCIENTIST touches some buttons and pulls a lever. Ridiculous noise, lights flicker, then everything is back to normal)

BRAD. That felt like a massage.

MAD SCIENTIST. No pain, then?

BRAD. No. A short, sensual massage. Let's see it.

MAD SCIENTIST. Igor?

(IGOR fetches the prepared matrix. It is frothy and bright pink)

BRAD. Pretty!

PRESIDENT PILSNER. It's pink. What does that mean.

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MAD SCIENTIST. We don't know, Muriel. There are no controls. It could mean he's got a bright and sunny personality, or that he's friendly to animals. It could mean he's confused or lonely or trapped.

BRAD. It's quite a nice pink, dear. It seems restful. I could stare at it for quite some time. You like pink yourself.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. I like pink when it doesn't have meaning. This must be a practical joke.

IGOR. Oh, no, Madam President. This is a very serious endeavor.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. It's arbitrary then. A random chance. It's an accident.

IGOR. No. It certainly means something.

MAD SCIENTIST. We just don't know what.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Mumford, I think you know exactly what it means and I don't like it. Strap me in.

MAD SCIENTIST. Now?

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Immediately. Igor, prepare the matrix. Move, man!

MAD SCIENTIST. Close your eyes, then —

(Buttons, lever, noise, lights)

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Fetch the matrix.

(IGOR fetches the matrix. It is oily and blue)

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Blue. What does this mean.

MAD SCIENTIST. As I've told you and as you should know, as a scientist, we don't know yet, for we haven't done a scientifically controlled study.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. It's a good blue, midnight and slippery.

BRAD *(holds his liquid next to hers)*. Look, they match! I told you to stop worrying.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Keep quiet. Mix them together.

MAD SCIENTIST. Igor, fetch a beaker.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Me first. Then Brad.

(They mix the liquids in the beaker. They are like oil and water)

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Give me that. Get me a spoon.

(She stirs furiously. No change)

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Centrifuge.

(She centrifuges furiously. No change)

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Don't tell me you don't know what this means.

MAD SCIENTIST. I don't know what this means. This is an uncontrolled experiment in a revolutionary new field.

BRAD. It could mean you like blue and I like pink.

IGOR. And never the twain shall meet.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Keep your mouth shut. Mumford, in the machine.

MAD SCIENTIST. Try to keep calm, dear, this is nothing to get upset about. (*as she straps him in*) Ow!

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Igor, prepare.

(*Buttons, lever, noise, lights*)

BRAD. I think it will be frothy.

(*It is greenish mud-colored and bubbles carbonatedly*)

MAD SCIENTIST. Ugh. I don't like the color at all.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. It is disgusting. Igor, mix them. Brad's and Mumford's.

(*The mix. The result is dark pink and very volatile*)

BRAD. Look at it go! Pure excitement, Muriel! Pure electricity!

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Bradley, I have black belts in several martial arts. Now Mumford's and mine.

(*The mix. The result is similar, but bluish brown*)

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Interesting. Mumford? Interesting.

BRAD. Now mix the two together.

(*The result is similar, but blackish. Pause*)

PRESIDENT PILSNER. The results of this experiment will never leave this room. Never. Do you understand?

MAD SCIENTIST. This is a very unscientific attitude.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. I have given you my orders and I expect them to be obeyed!

MAD SCIENTIST. Absolutely. But I must protest your suppression of experimental results funded by the American taxpayer.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. I can destroy you.

IGOR. She's right, you know.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Then we're agreed. Mumford, carry on. Daily updates. Bradley, follow me.

(*As they leave, BRAD blows MAD SCIENTIST a kiss, or maybe some tongue*)

MAD SCIENTIST. I feel exhilarated. Magical.

IGOR. Gin, sir?

MAD SCIENTIST. Absolutely. But first, clean up.

(*MAD SCIENTIST leaves as IGOR cleans up. IGOR throws the mixture liquids into a large plastic basin, stares at it, thinks, goes and gets some baking products (flour, sugar, vanilla), throws them into the basin, gets a wooden spoon, stirs. Fizzing and popping noises and smoke, baby crying. Then IGOR looks shocked into the basin, takes out a squalling baby, leaves*)

Scene 4 — Monday

MAD SCIENTIST and BRAD in front of another apparatus

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MAD SCIENTIST. The Brain-o-vac core has worked perfectly: it's flexible and configurable beyond our wildest dreams. Just flip these wires and you can modify the spirit instead of measuring it. Just add another Brain-o-vac, and connect them thusly, and you can switch people's spirits. The picture of elegance.

BRAD. So two people sit under these cones —

MAD SCIENTIST. I flip the switch, and their personalities are transferred.

BRAD. Like *Freaky Friday*.

IGOR (*coming in*). Sorry, I had to — go to the bathroom.

MAD SCIENTIST. Your spirit in another body. The questions we can finally answer!

BRAD. I want to do it.

MAD SCIENTIST. You do.

BRAD. Oh yes, right now, with you. Let's go.

MAD SCIENTIST. Igor, it's ready?

IGOR. I've tested it as much as I can, on mice, rats.

BRAD. Did it work?

IGOR. Well, it didn't kill them. It's not clear how much personality a mouse has got.

MAD SCIENTIST. Then strap us in.

BRAD (*as IGOR straps him in*). What will it feel like?

MAD SCIENTIST. If our calculations are correct, it's instantaneous. You won't feel anything. You'll just be over here.

BRAD. Too bad. Your experiments generally feel quite nice.

MAD SCIENTIST. I'm trembling. The first modification, Igor!

IGOR. The first of many. Are you ready?

MAD SCIENTIST. Yes.

(IGOR *pushes some buttons, pulls a lever, a different ridiculous noise, the lights flicker. In their chairs, MAD SCIENTIST and BRAD groan and go completely slack*)

IGOR. Dr. Vollertinsky? Mr. Pilsner? Dr. Vollertinsky! (*he goes to BRAD'S BODY and slaps him in the face*)

BRAD'S BODY. Gaaaaaaaaaaaaa

MAD SCIENTIST'S BODY. Ffchhhkkkk

(*Both BRAD'S BODY and MAD SCIENTIST'S BODY are groaning, slack, floundering, motor coordination gone. They cannot talk properly. The more coordinated sounds — diphthongs like 'i' in 'fire', plosives like 'p' — are harder. As time goes on, they may talk more quickly, but their mouths cannot keep up with their brains*)

IGOR. Oh, no. Dr. Vollertinsky, are you all right!

BRAD'S BODY. Aaaaaaaa yeeeeeeeeee (*tries to shake his head "Yes"*)

IGOR. Are you in there? You're mentally functioning?

BRAD'S BODY. Aaaaaaaooooooooooooo maaaaa (*head shakes "Yes"*)

IGOR. What's gone wrong?
 BRAD'S BODY. Woooooooooannnn wwworrrrrrrrrkkhh
 IGOR. Won't work. You can't make the body work?
 BRAD'S BODY. Aaaaaaoooww fffuuuukkhht Shhhiiiiit
 IGOR (*going to MAD SCIENTIST'S BODY*). Mr. Pilsner!
 MAD SCIENTIST'S BODY (*trying to stand up, and to learn to talk*). Mmaa Mmaa
 Mmaa Pee Pee Pee Buh Buh (*etc.*)
 IGOR. Good idea, sir. Dr. Vollertinsky, try to stand up. I'm sure this is transient.
 This brain just isn't what you're used to.
 BRAD'S BODY. Yaaaaaaaaa
 IGOR. No, fantastic! It's worked!
 (MAD SCIENTIST'S BODY *lunges for IGOR, falls*)
 IGOR. Sir, be careful!
 (BRAD'S BODY *manages to stand up, tries to walk*)
 IGOR (*helping MAD SCIENTIST'S BODY to his feet*). Stay calm now. It won't be
 this bad for long, and we'll have you back in your body in a jiffy. Just think of it as
 a joke, right? Or think how you're furthering the cause of science!
 (MAD SCIENTIST'S BODY *lunges again. Small child babbling offstage*)
 IGOR. Oh, dear. Just a moment. (*exits*)
 (MAD SCIENTIST'S BODY *and BRAD'S BODY turn to face one another*)
 BRAD'S BODY. Aaaamm soorrrrih [I'm sorry.]
 MAD SCIENTIST'S BODY. Khom eer kmmeer [Come here, come here.]
 (*They approach and kiss one another. As they kiss, their motions become more fluent.*
 PRESIDENT PILSNER *sweeps in. Pause*)
 PRESIDENT PILSNER (*quietly*). Bradley.
 (MAD SCIENTIST'S BODY *and BRAD'S BODY fall, instantly awkward again*)
 MAD SCIENTIST'S BODY. Ahh gawwd
 BRAD'S BODY. Prezidnn Plllssnaaa ltt mexxplaain
 PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to MAD SCIENTIST'S BODY*). What have you done to my
 husband? Bitten off his tongue?
 MAD SCIENTIST'S BODY. Ahh gawwwd
 BRAD'S BODY. Nnnno, Prezzzdd, Mmurill, thagiz Braat, Iii Mmmffrt
 IGOR (*coming in*). Sorry about that — Madam President! What an unexpected
 pleasure.
 BRAD'S BODY. Eeggr! Hexxplaain
 PRESIDENT PILSNER. Please explain to me what your supervisor has done to my
 husband, who, while he was never a rocket scientist, was previously able to talk.
 IGOR. Ah, yes. Well, you see, really, um, we've done an experiment.

BRAD'S BODY. Yaaaa. Expprrmeennn.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. And what was the purpose of this experiment.

IGOR. We were investigating —

BRAD'S BODY (*interrupting*). Wrbginnnerrgaa brroob tha hummn sooll. [We're beginning to probe the human soul.]

IGOR. We were investigating a new application of the Brain-o-vac core. Part of the apparatus from Friday.

BRAD'S BODY. Afffantstc peeesa mmmacheenrr! Ellgnn beyaand bleef. [A fantastic piece of machinery! Elegant beyond belief.]

PRESIDENT PILSNER. What new application would this be.

BRAD'S BODY. Thaa sssweetchnng aa spritts!

IGOR. Switching bodies.

BRAD'S BODY. Izza drmm fr jjenraaashns aa mn. [It's been a dream for generations of man.]

IGOR. So your husband —

BRAD'S BODY (*interrupting*). Frrzz laangga peepal wwaakrrrth. Wannawaaow-kna naaathrr mannshoooes. [For as long as people walked the earth. Want to walk in another man's shoes.]

IGOR. Your husband —

BRAD'S BODY (*interrupting*). Sheeeea wrrrld fffama noothrr poonta vuuu. [See the world from another point of view.]

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Bradley, be quiet.

BRAD'S BODY. Aammmnnaabraaddee! Mmfaarrgh!

MAD SCIENTIST'S BODY. Shaadaapp! (*he tries to throw something at BRAD'S BODY, it falls on him instead*) Aachh.

IGOR. Sir, maybe I should explain?

BRAD'S BODY. Naaaarr! Mrrreeell, aaaaa Mmfaarrgh! Mmee! Naaag hiim! Thaa bawwdee, maa heddd!

MAD SCIENTIST'S BODY. Brragg! (*he tackles BRAD'S BODY, they both go down*)

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Why is your supervisor attacking my husband?

IGOR. Actually, Madam, it's the other way around. Um, your husband, um, volunteered — of his own free will, in fact it was his idea, he insisted and who are we to stop the president's husband from taking part in the spirit of scientific inquiry? — he volunteered to try the experiment.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Switching bodies.

IGOR. Yes. So right now, your husband is in Dr. Vollertinsky's body. And vice versa.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. And why are they both congenital idiots?

IGOR. Ah, an unforeseen complication. The wiring of their brains is so different that it is very difficult for them to control one another's bodies. They're not idiots

— far from it! — and once we put them back in the correct bodies, everything will be back to normal.

BRAD'S BODY. Preesaassleh.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. And why were they necking when I came in?

BRAD'S BODY. Narnarr, noo, nonononono, nagnekkking, noo, nanananana —

MAD SCIENTIST'S BODY. Shhaagaap! (*tries to throw something else*)

IGOR. Um, they couldn't have been necking, um —

BRAD'S BODY. Zaaa *exxammnaashnn. Meddcaaaarxaaamnaashn.* [It was an examination. Medical examination.]

IGOR. It's probably some, um, motor-coordination problem. One tries to move one's, um, legs, and the tongue moves instead.

BRAD'S BODY (*interrupting*). *Meddcaarrxmaniishn, laagga daaaktrr, wida shtethascooog.* [Like a doctor with a stethoscope.]

MAD SCIENTIST'S BODY. Idds too laayytt, gaadammit shhaagaap, shaagap! (*tackles him again*)

IGOR. Um. Or something with the brain, of course that's always possible. But certainly not necking.

(*Pause*)

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Well, that certainly sounds reasonable. Obviously there is something wrong with my husband and your leg-tongue coordination theory may explain it. Obviously my pink-essenced husband would never consciously stick his tongue down one of my male researchers' throats. (*To MAD SCIENTIST'S BODY, but glancing at BRAD'S BODY: she knows the truth*) As for this body-switching idea, it is ludicrous and goes against all we know of science. *All of Me* is not biology. I will bed you, "Dr. Vollertinsky", before I believe this heap of dung your assistant has fed me. (*To BRAD'S BODY*) "Bradley", come on; we have plans for dinner and afterwards. I'll send him back tomorrow morning for you to undo the damage.

BRAD'S BODY. *BuugammnaBrrdd, aaMmfrrgg, Doggrr Mmfrrg Vallrrtnskgrr!*

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Oh, how charming you've made him, he'll be the hit of the party. Come now. (*she picks him up*)

MAD SCIENTIST'S BODY. Hunny doonndoothis. Pleees.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Excuse me? I didn't quite catch that. Maybe you should take the good doctor's tongue out of your throat and try again. Good night! (*sweeps out*)

MAD SCIENTIST'S BODY (*standing unsteadily*). Gaaddammiid!! GADAMID THAS MAAY WYYYYFE!!

Scene 5 — Tuesday

BRAD and MAD SCIENTIST in the apparatus, and IGOR

IGOR. There, you should be back.

(13)

17 March

MAD SCIENTIST. Thank God. What a disaster.

BRAD. Yes.

MAD SCIENTIST. She's going to cut my funding, kick me out of the college, drag my name through the mud before the entire scientific community, make sure I never work again.

IGOR. That bitch.

MAD SCIENTIST. Exactly so.

BRAD. I demand an apology.

MAD SCIENTIST. Brad, now is not the time.

BRAD. I absolutely demand an apology right now. This minute, you troll.

IGOR. Well, for me, I think the experiment went a little out of our control, and there are many reasons for that, it's not like there is anyone to blame, there's not, but —

MAD SCIENTIST. Why should I apologize to you when your wife is working this minute to destroy me, all because you married her five years ago knowing you loved me, probably because you were too weak to come out to your harpy of a mother? Why should I apologize when if you had been honest and straightforward none of this would ever have happened?

BRAD. You slept with my wife in my body and then you called her a bitch!

MAD SCIENTIST. I did not sleep with your wife!

BRAD. You did, I can feel it!

MAD SCIENTIST. And even if I did it wasn't exactly under my control!

BRAD. She raped you?

MAD SCIENTIST. Yes, exactly, that's what I would be saying if I was saying that she slept with your body which I'm not saying!

BRAD. Now you're calling her a rapist. Apologize, god damn you!

MAD SCIENTIST. You apologize, you jerk!

IGOR. Gentlemen, you're a little tired out from this whole experience, maybe we should all go home and get a little rest —

BRAD (*overlapping*). You've dishonored my wife and I demand satisfaction.

MAD SCIENTIST. What do you care?

BRAD. She's my wife!

MAD SCIENTIST. You don't love her, you don't even want her, and you haven't slept with her in months.

BRAD. When she slept with you in this body, tell me, Mumford, how did it feel? Was it awkward? Grinding? Inelegant? Or did you get a hard-on every time she touched you, every time you looked at her? And was sex as natural as breathing?

MAD SCIENTIST. You love me. You want me.

BRAD. I want both!

MAD SCIENTIST. I need to sit down. Igor.

(IGOR *fetches a chair*, MAD SCIENTIST *sits*. *The FRANKENSTEIN comes in quietly and*

plays idly)

MAD SCIENTIST. This is a disaster.

BRAD. You're right, she hasn't slept with me in weeks, and I've wanted to. I'm at the end of my rope. And then, the one night someone else is inhabiting my body.

MAD SCIENTIST. And the whole time she was telling me, you, about how she's going to destroy my career. It was difficult to concentrate.

BRAD. Maybe I can convince her to leave you alone. Tell her that I volunteered for the experiment. And I was hallucinating when she found us kissing.

MAD SCIENTIST. You really love her?

BRAD. I guess so.

MAD SCIENTIST. What about me?

BRAD. Yep.

MAD SCIENTIST. Utterly untenable. Disastrously ill-designed. Ludicrous. Surely with a carefully designed experiment this can be repaired.

IGOR. Shall I start a new lab notebook then?

FRANKENSTEIN (*improbably gravelly voice*). Give her a flower.

IGOR (*to FRANKENSTEIN*). Shh!

MAD SCIENTIST. Who is that?

IGOR. Oh, just some charming young child in from the playground, wandering in accidentally I'm sure. Run along, little girl, someone will come play with you in a minute —

FRANKENSTEIN. Seriously, give her a flower. Girls love flowers.

BRAD. She looks familiar.

IGOR. Honey, we're busy here right now, but —

FRANKENSTEIN. Daddy I don't want to go.

MAD SCIENTIST. Daddy?

IGOR. A slip of the tongue, disturbed children often get parentally confused. Now this is no time for a game, hon —

FRANKENSTEIN. Wait, Daddy, oh, they're Daddy! Okay, bye.

BRAD. We're Daddy?

MAD SCIENTIST. Wait, stop, Igor, grab her there. All right, little girl. What's your name?

FRANKENSTEIN. Don't have one. Daddy's waiting for you to decide.

MAD SCIENTIST. When you say Daddy, you mean my assistant, Igor?

FRANKENSTEIN. I guess so.

MAD SCIENTIST. But we're Daddy, too? Brad and I?

FRANKENSTEIN. Yep. For real.

MAD SCIENTIST. Have you ever been hospitalized for a serious psychiatric condition, such as manic depression or schizophrenia?

FRANKENSTEIN. No. I was born last Friday.

MAD SCIENTIST. Igor, explain.

IGOR. Well, sir, you remember, um, the spirit matrices from last Friday's experiment.

MAD SCIENTIST. I do.

IGOR. You had asked me to clean them up.

BRAD. You asked Igor to throw out my spirit?

MAD SCIENTIST. It would have cluttered up the lab. It wasn't your spirit, just a representation. We can always make more.

BRAD. You are amazing.

IGOR. But I thought, um, I'd just do a little experiment with them instead. So I added some baking products and, um, there she was.

MAD SCIENTIST. You're claiming that this girl is a combination of human spirit distillation — my human spirit distillation! —

BRAD. And mine.

IGOR. And Madam President's.

MAD SCIENTIST. — and biscuit mix?

IGOR. Precisely.

FRANKENSTEIN. In a manner of speaking.

MAD SCIENTIST. This is fantastic. And she's grown up this fast.

IGOR. Several years a day. I'm exhausted trying to keep up. And who knows when, or if, she'll stop growing?

BRAD. Did you use yeast?

IGOR. Hmm. Yes, I had. An interesting theory.

FRANKENSTEIN. So, hello, Daddy.

MAD SCIENTIST. She does look strangely familiar. Do you want us to take care of you?

FRANKENSTEIN. Not really.

MAD SCIENTIST. Good. The experiments we could run! Mind-boggling. Her cellular and genomic structure might not be human! And how does she relate to our spirits? She may echo our souls in proportion to the amounts of spirit matrix in her recipe, or she may mostly be a clone of one spirit, or something entirely different, dependent only on the blank matrix itself. This one result could justify my life as a scientist. (*to FRANKENSTEIN*) May we experiment on you?

FRANKENSTEIN. Yes, but only if it's scientifically justified.

BRAD. And my wife doesn't shut you down.

MAD SCIENTIST. A chip off the old block. Igor, help me get her into the device.

PRESIDENT PILSNER (*sweeping in*). Mumford, who is this? Have you tired of using my husband as a test subject? I would have thought his charms were inexhaustible.

MAD SCIENTIST. Muriel.

FRANKENSTEIN. Is that Mommy?

IGOR. Madam President, let me explain. This girl —

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Igor, don't speak. I'm on a mission. So, Mumford. How do you — how do you feel today.

MAD SCIENTIST. What's your motive.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. I was just thinking that — well, some things that I was thinking yesterday — and saying — might not be — well, I feel better today. That's all.

MAD SCIENTIST. I feel better today also.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Good. That's good. And how's the research.

MAD SCIENTIST. I'm a little concerned about my position in this college, but other than that it's going well.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Oh, your position, don't be so crass. You can expect full, indefinite support from this college.

IGOR. Madam President!

MAD SCIENTIST. This is quite a shock.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. There is, of course, a condition.

MAD SCIENTIST. Which is.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. That you marry me after I divorce my gay husband.

MAD SCIENTIST. What!

BRAD. Oh God.

IGOR. That's blackmail!

FRANKENSTEIN. Mommy, don't be unreasonable.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. What's unreasonable about it! Why should this be a surprise! I am neither happy nor satisfied in my personal life, a state of affairs for which you are considerably culpable through your adulterous liaisons with Bradley. It stands to reason that I should seek to better my situation, and divorcing my husband, whose sexual orientation does not appear to include me, is a natural first step. As for marrying you, there are moral repercussions of blackmail and such, but I am simply hurrying destiny along, forcing the correct outcome, and there's nothing wrong in that. It was foretold by the mixing of spirit liquids and confirmed by our passion last night.

MAD SCIENTIST. You knew it was me!

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Of course I did.

MAD SCIENTIST. My God.

BRAD. I'm not gay!

PRESIDENT PILSNER. What are you then?

BRAD. Bi!

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Well, that's a theoretical sexual orientation if I've ever heard one!

BRAD. And how dare you blame this on me! I had to do something after week upon week of you busy all the time, just not in the mood.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Fair enough. Bradley, this isn't really about you, I admit

that. It's about your poor choice of lover. Mumford. Who has always belonged to me.

IGOR (*aside to MAD SCIENTIST*). Do you remember the sexual amorometer we built several months ago?

MAD SCIENTIST (*aside to IGOR*). The device that manipulated human love? Yes, it was an abject failure.

IGOR (*aside to MAD SCIENTIST*). Perhaps not.

PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to MAD SCIENTIST*). When I saw you for the first time, I was unimpressed. But within a week you obsessed me. I tried to analyze these feelings, to convince myself of their self-evident stupidity, but they had a fluttering, shifting core that no amount of introspection could touch. The more I considered you the more I had to have you. It became an experimental problem with a reachable goal. And now, I've reached that goal. Mumford, my offer stands. What do you choose?

FRANKENSTEIN (*offering a flower to PRESIDENT PILSNER*). Mommy?

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Why is this child calling me Mommy?

IGOR. Because you're her mother.

FRANKENSTEIN. Mommy, please calm down. Take this flower. I'm scared.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. I'm scared too.

(*As PRESIDENT PILSNER reaches out to take the flower, FRANKENSTEIN suddenly grabs her arm and executes a judo move. PRESIDENT PILSNER falls senseless*)

FRANKENSTEIN. Quick. How do we fix her.

MAD SCIENTIST. Igor?

IGOR. If the sexual amorometer worked, then hooking it up to the Brain-o-vac core should increase its power tenfold. We could change her sexual orientation.

BRAD. Perfect. Just what she deserves.

FRANKENSTEIN. You won't hurt her, right?

MAD SCIENTIST. No, little girl, we won't hurt her, we'll just change one of the most fundamental parts of her personality without her permission.

(*IGOR returns with the sexual amorometer. BRAD has dragged PRESIDENT PILSNER into the chair. IGOR and MAD SCIENTIST connect the amorometer*)

BRAD. Are you ready?

MAD SCIENTIST. Igor, go hold her down. Clear!

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Naargh!

(*As MAD SCIENTIST throws the switch, PRESIDENT PILSNER breaks free of the chair, and in the struggle, IGOR gets dosed. Lights flicker, ridiculous noise*)

PRESIDENT PILSNER. How dare you.

IGOR. Oh wow.

MAD SCIENTIST. Igor! How do you feel?

IGOR. Oh wow.

BRAD. What's wrong with him?

IGOR. Nothing's wrong, I've never had a sexual orientation before. This is — wow. Hello Madam President!

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Bradley. Igor. Mumford. Especially you. How could you do this to me. I will not be mocked. I decree: Your funding is gone. Your livelihood is gone. As God is my witness, the three of you will molder in substandard third-world jails for as long as I am alive.

FRANKENSTEIN. Mommy?

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Stay away from me.

MAD SCIENTIST (*to BRAD*). When I give the signal, we'll jump her.

FRANKENSTEIN (*holding two wires*). Mommy, Daddy, Daddy, Daddy, you all need to be more reasonable. I know what you're feeling, I understand your actions, I empathize. But this is not a social way to behave.

BRAD. You'll learn how social animals behave when you're more than four days old!

FRANKENSTEIN. Please. Pretty please.

MAD SCIENTIST. Now!

(*As BRAD and MAD SCIENTIST jump for PRESIDENT PILSNER, FRANKENSTEIN brings the two wires together. Lights flicker, everyone but FRANKENSTEIN falls to the ground in seizures*)

FRANKENSTEIN. Okay.

(*She begins to drag the bodies to chairs*)

Scene 6 — Tuesday night

MAD SCIENTIST, IGOR, PRESIDENT PILSNER, and BRAD standing strapped to boards, the FRANKENSTEIN checking them all, and a viola center stage

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Little girl, you realize that this is a felony, and "felony" is grown-up talk for "evil".

IGOR. Don't call her evil, she's your daughter.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. My genes can't compensate for theirs. I abjure all responsibility.

MAD SCIENTIST. Just keep quiet, Muriel. We've got to charm our way out of this. If you can manage it. You harpy.

BRAD. Watch your language.

MAD SCIENTIST. What's wrong, Brad? Still in love?

FRANKENSTEIN. Well, super-dee-duper! You're all doing very well. And the drug should have hit your brainstems a minute ago, so another couple seconds, and everything will be perfect!

PRESIDENT PILSNER. We're going to die! Mumford, I'll have your head for this!

IGOR. What drug?

FRANKENSTEIN. I call it Empathitin-24! I built it from bits while you were all in seizures. It's an empathic center hyperstimulator, so you have to express your emotions, but you understand everyone else's emotions super perfectly. You just look at them and you know what they feel!

MAD SCIENTIST. Did you test this drug?

FRANKENSTEIN. Oh, did I have to? Daddy, you never tested anything.

MAD SCIENTIST. Well, Igor —

IGOR. Hoist by your own petard, sir.

MAD SCIENTIST. So it would seem. Thanks for the years of service.

FRANKENSTEIN. Don't cry, Daddy and Daddy, it's perfectly safe. I thought about it really hard for a couple minutes. And I just think you need to understand each other and everything will be fine, because you're all good at heart. I want my family to be functional, so we need to communicate and empathize and make kisses. And I decided you're going to do that right now.

BRAD. What about these boards?

FRANKENSTEIN. That's just a precaution. I don't want you using your hands.

BRAD. Why not?

FRANKENSTEIN. I don't know! But I thought it would look funny! Now I'm going to play the viola so there's a soothing atmosphere. Remember, everyone knows when you're lying!

(The FRANKENSTEIN picks up the viola and starts to play one of the slower movements from György Ligeti's Sonata for solo viola. She remains standing, serene, wrapped in the action of playing. The other four can move around — the boards are not screwed to the floor — but only with difficulty. Pause)

BRAD. I don't feel any different.

MAD SCIENTIST. Neither do I. Perhaps she made a mistake, and the drug is a placebo.

IGOR. Sir, I love you.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Perhaps not.

MAD SCIENTIST. I've known for some time.

IGOR. But as a friend and colleague.

MAD SCIENTIST. And that's it, isn't it. How disappointing. I've long harbored fantasies about you and Brad and I.

BRAD. That's disgusting.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Bradley! You are so casually hurtful!

IGOR. Don't worry, Madam. It's not a surprise. I can see it in his beady eyes every time he swaggers into the lab.

BRAD. It's the way you hang on to Mumford like a limpet. You resent every minute I spend alone with him, yet you set up appointments for us, make hotel reservations, arrange rental cars, like a martyr. Then you give us the keys and look

at Mumford like a teary ceramic waif figurine. It makes me sick.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Only because Igor thinks of something other than himself, unlike you, you toad!

MAD SCIENTIST. You don't even believe that.

BRAD. She knows I love her and she knows she's hurt me, so she's lashing out to protect herself.

IGOR. Madam President, I understand. You can let him go.

MAD SCIENTIST (*to BRAD*). But do you love me?

PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to IGOR*). It's been so hard. I worked so hard to get him. When I realized I didn't want him I didn't know what to do.

BRAD (*to MAD SCIENTIST*). Yes.

MAD SCIENTIST (*to BRAD*). There's something you're not telling me.

PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to IGOR*). I've always wanted to be a good person.

BRAD (*to PRESIDENT PILSNER*). You're an obsessive, all-devouring power bitch!

PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to BRAD*). Yes! But that's not all!

BRAD. I know.

MAD SCIENTIST (*to BRAD*). Don't avoid the question. Look at me.

IGOR (*to PRESIDENT PILSNER*). You are a good person.

BRAD (*to MAD SCIENTIST*). I'm telling you everything.

MAD SCIENTIST (*to BRAD*). My God. You hate yourself for loving me.

PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to IGOR*). Oh, Igor, thank you. It's so nice to hear someone say it.

IGOR (*to PRESIDENT PILSNER*). Could you ever love me?

PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to IGOR*). God, no.

IGOR (*looking upwards*). Why was I even put on this earth?

BRAD (*to MAD SCIENTIST*). That's right. I can't stand the thought of us together. I hate looking at myself in the mirror.

MAD SCIENTIST (*to BRAD*). Is it that I'm a man?

BRAD (*to MAD SCIENTIST*). Partially. And that you think a lot. I hate thinking.

PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to BRAD*). That's right, you do. Why is that?

IGOR (*to PRESIDENT PILSNER*). Well, would you have sex with me?

PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to IGOR*). I dunno, maybe.

BRAD (*to PRESIDENT PILSNER*). Because thinking always seems to lead to a bad end. Look at us. We'd never be strapped to boards and drugged to high Sunday if he hadn't been thinking so much.

IGOR (*to PRESIDENT PILSNER*). Really? Why?

PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to IGOR*). It might be interesting. And you may be surprised but my sexual appetite is immense.

MAD SCIENTIST (*to PRESIDENT PILSNER*). It sure is. That was amazing, the other night.

PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to MAD SCIENTIST*). Want to do it again?

MAD SCIENTIST (*to* PRESIDENT PILSNER). No.
BRAD. Please talk about something else.
PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to* MAD SCIENTIST). Why not?
MAD SCIENTIST (*to* PRESIDENT PILSNER). It made me feel inadequate.
BRAD (*to* MAD SCIENTIST). That's right. Run away. The inadequacy gets to you, it gets right under your skin and you can't stop thinking about it. And then gradually it turns into love.
IGOR (*to* BRAD). Inadequacy has nothing to do with love.
MAD SCIENTIST (*to* IGOR). Jesus, Igor, think about what you're saying.
IGOR. You're right. Never mind.
BRAD (*to* MAD SCIENTIST). Thinking is a total disaster.
MAD SCIENTIST (*to* BRAD). That's it! My brainpower makes you feel inadequate!
BRAD (*to* MAD SCIENTIST). God, not at all.
MAD SCIENTIST (*to* BRAD). Oh, dear, you're right.
IGOR (*to* MAD SCIENTIST). It makes me feel inadequate.
MAD SCIENTIST (*to* IGOR). Igor! Don't! I picked you out of how many undergraduates to be my assistant?
IGOR (*to* MAD SCIENTIST). You just liked the hump.
MAD SCIENTIST (*to* IGOR). Well, yes, but that's not all.
PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to* BRAD). You were the most adequate lover I ever had.
BRAD (*to* PRESIDENT PILSNER). The most adequate? Why don't you just kill me?
PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to* BRAD). I'm trying to give you a compliment! I married you, didn't I?
IGOR (*to* MAD SCIENTIST). Why'd you fantasize about me and Brad?
BRAD (*to* PRESIDENT PILSNER). You married me out of guilt after you made me love you.
PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to* BRAD). Mostly. Also I wanted the ceremony.
MAD SCIENTIST (*to* IGOR). I'm really drawn to your — your —
IGOR (*to* MAD SCIENTIST). My hump?
MAD SCIENTIST (*to* IGOR). Yes, but that's not all.
BRAD (*to* PRESIDENT PILSNER). How dare you even say you want to be a good person.
MAD SCIENTIST (*to* IGOR). I'm drawn to your essential inner niceness.
PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to* BRAD). I do want to be a good person.
IGOR (*to* PRESIDENT PILSNER). You are a good person.
PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to* IGOR). I'm evil, Igor.
MAD SCIENTIST (*to* PRESIDENT PILSNER). That's a lie. You think almost everything you've done is for the best.
PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to* MAD SCIENTIST). And prove me wrong!
BRAD (*to* PRESIDENT PILSNER). All right, bitch! I am a broken man because of

you!

PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to BRAD*). You are not, you'll be fine in a year. You'll think about me from time to time, but wistfully and with a little smile on your face. You'll go about your life like everyone else does and it'll be fine.

BRAD. I will not.

MAD SCIENTIST. Yes, you will. And the same thing will happen with me.

BRAD. What are you saying? Do you want to leave me too?

MAD SCIENTIST. No, I love you. But you hate our relationship so you'll find a way to make it end.

IGOR (*to BRAD*). And you'll be fine. The pretty ones always get on.

BRAD. Shut up, you troll.

IGOR. Why do you hate me so much, really?

MAD SCIENTIST (*to IGOR*). Because you're happier than he is.

BRAD (*to IGOR*). Exactly right.

IGOR. That's terrible.

BRAD. Fuck you and your pity.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. Bradley, language!

MAD SCIENTIST (*to PRESIDENT PILSNER*). Why are you such a prude about that? It's like my grandmother.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. That's how you see me? A grandmother?

MAD SCIENTIST. No, as my boss.

IGOR. As a conduit for funding.

PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to MAD SCIENTIST*). I hate you.

MAD SCIENTIST (*to PRESIDENT PILSNER*). And as a person for whom I have friendly, rivalrous affection.

BRAD (*to PRESIDENT PILSNER*). Based partially on outwitting you and hiding from you his relationship with me.

MAD SCIENTIST. But real affection.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. I still hate you.

MAD SCIENTIST. Will you still fund me?

PRESIDENT PILSNER. I don't know.

IGOR (*to PRESIDENT PILSNER*). Will you still sleep with me?

PRESIDENT PILSNER (*to IGOR*). Now I'd only do it to get to him.

IGOR. I still want to do it.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. No, you don't.

IGOR. You're right.

(Pause)

MAD SCIENTIST. What do we do now?

BRAD. We wait for this fucking drug to wear off.

PRESIDENT PILSNER. And then we leave.

(Pause)

IGOR. No one wants to talk more?

BRAD and PRESIDENT PILSNER. No.

MAD SCIENTIST. I do.

BRAD and PRESIDENT PILSNER. Too bad.

MAD SCIENTIST. That's not a very scientific attitude. This is a unique chance we've got. The excitement of discovery! A voyage into the human mind!

BRAD and PRESIDENT PILSNER. Fuck you.

(Pause)

MAD SCIENTIST *(to IGOR)*. Well, Igor, how about it?

IGOR. You don't really want to talk to me.

MAD SCIENTIST. That's true.

(Pause)

BRAD. It's almost midnight.

(Pause. A clock strikes twelve. At the last stroke, BRAD and PRESIDENT PILSNER slip into comas)

IGOR. What happened?

MAD SCIENTIST. It's Wednesday.

IGOR. Oh yes.

(Pause)

MAD SCIENTIST. Well, Igor, it's been five years and one week since I moved to this provincial backwater in search of a quiet, supportive base from which to launch my investigation into the depths of the human spirit. And what results have I discovered? What questions have I answered? What conventional wisdom have I demolished? What secret doors into the recesses of the human brain have I unlocked?

IGOR. None, sir.

MAD SCIENTIST. That's right. And do you know why?

IGOR. No. But it's not for lack of trying.

MAD SCIENTIST. Perhaps I don't deserve to know.

IGOR. Oh, you big lug. Come here.

(They come together, with some clattering of boards, and stay close. MAD SCIENTIST starts to cry. FRANKENSTEIN comes to the end of the movement and stops, radiant.

End of play)