

# The Storm at Sea

He was not enjoying his time with his friends. He felt he was simply wasting his time\* without me and wanted to go back to London. He asked me to meet him as soon as I could in Perth\*.

His letter helped me to think more clearly. I decided to leave the island place in two days.



I went back to my laboratory. The pieces of the female monster were scattered\* all over the floor. I felt as if I had torn\* a human being to pieces with my bare\* hands, but I took a deep breath and started to clean up. I took the pieces of the creature I had destroyed and put them into a basket\*. Then I covered them with some heavy stones I had collected ready to take the basket out to sea and dump\* it there. As I waited for night to come, I sat on the beach cleaning and arranging my equipment.

I knew without a doubt that I would never make another creature, I would never do what the creature had made me promise to do. I knew what the monster would do to me now, but nothing could change my mind. Making a second creature would have made my life better but it would have been a terrible thing to do. I now realised I must have been completely mad to have made that promise.



At about two o'clock in the morning, I put the basket into my little sailing boat and went out to sea, to get as far away as possible from the fishing boats that were now returning home with the fish they

After the monster had gone, I sat in the darkness and silence of my cottage. I knew then that the monster would destroy me, as I had destroyed his mate. I was angry with him and with myself that I had not killed him when I had the chance and I was terrified when I thought who might be his next victim. I thought about my beloved Elizabeth and was filled with fear for her safety\*. I wanted to stay on this lonely island forever so that I would never have to see what terrible things the monster would do. Then, I was so exhausted that I fell asleep.



When I woke up the sun was already high in the sky. I felt better. The monster's words now felt like a bad dream, but they still echoed\* in my mind\*. *Remember I will be with you on your wedding night.*

I sat on the beach and had something to eat. I felt incredibly hungry. I saw a fishing boat coming towards me and a man got out of it carrying a packet of letters for me. Some were from my family in Switzerland and there was one from Clerval.

In his letter Clerval told me how much he wanted to see me again.

safety not in danger

echoed sound reflected by a wall or repeated in your head

mind intelligence, consciousness

wasting his time losing time for no good purpose  
Perth a city in the centre of Scotland  
scattered spread out  
torn (here) broken in a violent way

bare naked  
basket woven container  
dump throw (like rubbish)

had caught. The moon had been shining, but it became cloudy and dark, so I took the basket and dropped it into the water. I listened as it sank\* deep into the ocean.



It was a calm evening, there was only a light breeze. I decided to stay and enjoy the peace I was feeling, all alone on my boat, far from land and people. The sound of the waves relaxed me and I soon fell asleep.

It was day when I woke up and the light breeze of the night before had become a strong wind from the north east. It had blown\* me far away from land and the sea had become rough. When I turned the boat to try to get home, the waves crashed over the side and started to fill the boat. I had no choice. I had to go with the wind, I could not sail against it.

I felt sick with the movement of the boat and did not know where I was going. I had no compass and I did not know the geography of the area at all. I imagined myself out in the Atlantic ocean, where I would die a slow and terrible death without food or water. If I died, who would protect\* Elizabeth, my father, my brother?



After many frightening hours, I suddenly saw land rising\* out of the sea. As I got closer, I saw a little town and knew that I was safe. I managed to sail the boat towards the harbour\* and landed on the beach. I started to tidy up the boat and put the sails away. Soon, some people came and stood watching me from a distance. I thought it

sank went under water to the bottom of the sea  
blown moved by the wind  
protect stop anyone or anything hurting

rising moving up  
harbour port where ships/boats can stay safely

strange, they seemed angry. The last few years of my life had been terrible, but I did not know how much worse my story was going to get.



I was so relieved\* that I was safe after the night I had spent in my boat out in that storm, that I did not worry about why these people were angry. I didn't know where I was, but I decided to speak to them in English.

'My good friends,' I said, smiling at them. 'I would be very grateful\* if you could tell me where I am. What is the name of this town?'

'You will find that out pretty quickly,' said a man in English, 'and you do not need to look for a place to stay, there is already a place waiting for you.'

I was surprised by his rudeness\* and the anger in his voice.

'Why are you speaking to me like this? Do English people always welcome strangers in this way?'

'I do not know what the English would do,' replied the man, 'But in Ireland we do not welcome criminals\*.'

By this time a large number of people had arrived. I began to get a little worried, they seemed to be getting more and more angry.

Another man came up to me, he tapped\* me on the shoulder and said, 'Come, Sir. You must come with me to speak with Mr Kirwin. You have got a lot of explaining to do.'

'What do I have to explain?' I asked. 'I have done nothing wrong. Is this not a free country?'

'Oh, it is a free country for honest\* men,' was how the man replied.

relieved happy that something bad is finished  
grateful showing your thanks for something  
rudeness opposite of politeness

criminals people who do things that are illegal  
tapped hit lightly  
honest truthful

I could not understand what was happening to me.  
 'You must come with me to Mr Kirwin,' said the man. 'And explain  
 the death of a young man who was found here last night.'

When I heard this I was shocked\*, but, I thought, I am innocent  
 of any crime. I will be able to prove that. So, in silence, I followed  
 the man with the crowd following behind us to a large house in the  
 centre of the town. It was the house of Mr Kirwin.

(I am sorry, Walton, I have to stop my story for a moment. I cannot  
 go on. It is too terrible even thinking about the events of that day. I  
 will need every bit of strength to tell you what happened next.)



Mr Kirwin was a man of law, the local magistrate\*. He had a nice,  
 intelligent face, but the old man did not look at me with kindness.  
 He asked for witnesses\* to come and tell him what had happened.  
 One man stepped forward and told everyone how he, his son and his  
 brother-in-law, had been returning home from fishing last night. They  
 had landed and were walking along the beach when the man had  
 tripped\* over something lying there. They brought lanterns\* and saw  
 that it was the body of a man. At first they thought he had drowned,  
 but when they took the body to a nearby cottage and looked more  
 closely they saw black marks on his neck. He had been strangled.

On hearing this, I thought immediately about my brother's death.  
 After his body had been discovered, they had found black marks on  
 William's neck. I began to tremble. I was so worried that I could hardly

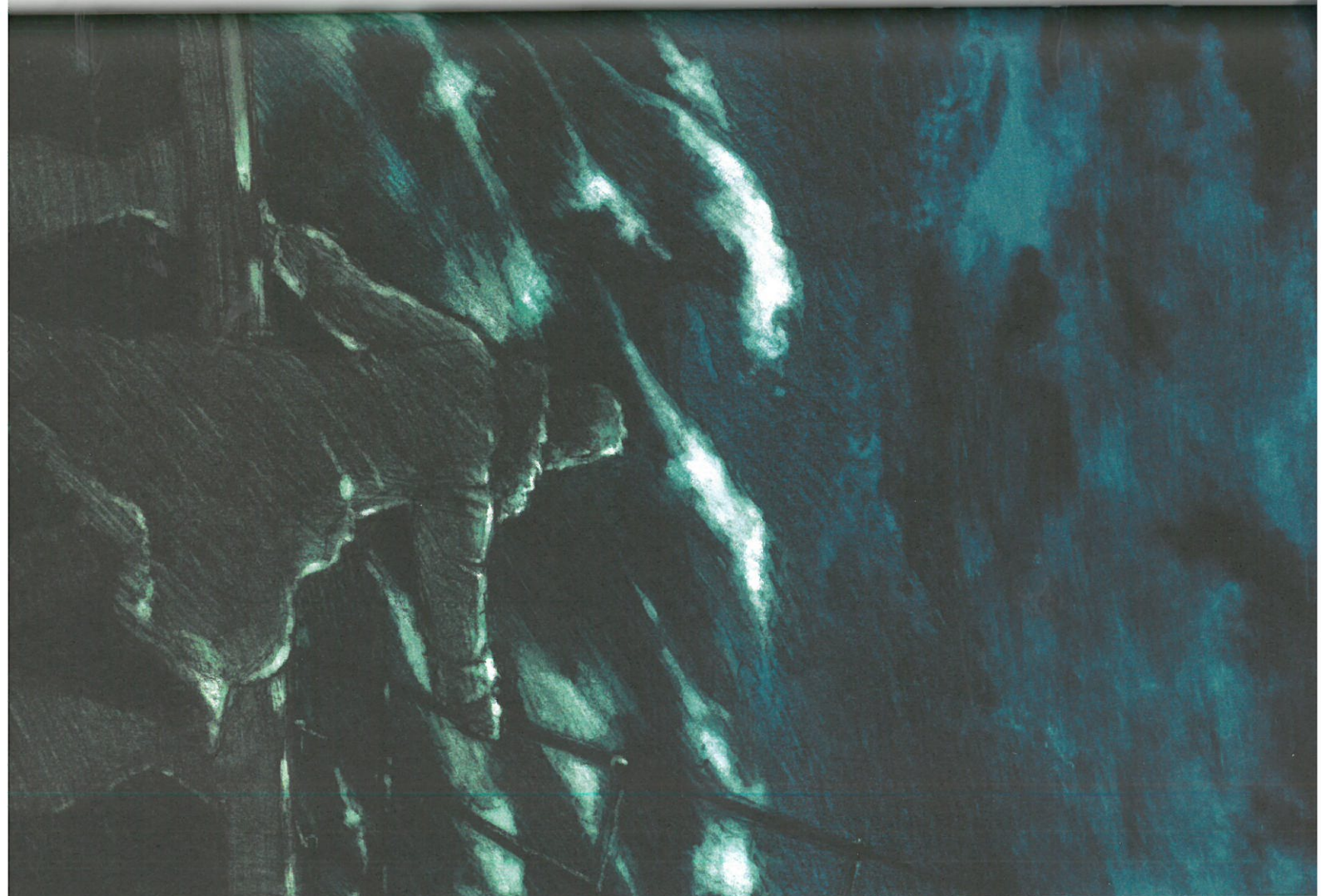
shocked surprised in a bad way

magistrate a type of judge

witnesses people who have seen something relating to a crime

tripped fell over something

lanterns lamps with a candle, covered by glass



stand up. Of course, to Mr Kirwin and the other people surrounding me this did not look good. My reaction made them even more sure that I was guilty.

The first man's son confirmed\* his father's story and added another important detail. After they had discovered the body he had looked out to sea and there, close to the shore, he had seen a boat in the darkness, which he said looked exactly like mine. In it sat a man on his own.

Then a woman came forward. She told us that an hour before she had heard about the body, she had been standing at her cottage door waiting for her husband to come back from fishing. She had seen a small sailing boat with only one man in it leaving the exact\* place on the beach where the body had later been found.

Another woman told how the men had brought the body to her cottage. When she touched it she found it was still warm. They tried to save him, but there was nothing they could do. The young man lying on the table in her cottage was already dead.

Other men spoke then. They said they could explain why I had come back to the place where I had in their opinion certainly committed the murder. They believed that after killing the man, I had tried to sail away from the shore, but finding the wind coming so strongly from the north east, I had been forced to come back. They said that I had to now pretended\* that I was innocent, but they were convinced that they were right.

No one had any more information. It was then that Mr Kirwin

confirmed prove something is true  
exact precise

pretended acted like

decided to take me to see the body. I think he wanted to see how I reacted when I saw it. I was not feeling calm and my situation looked bad, but I knew that Kirwin and the other people of the town would soon find out that I was innocent. On the night of the murder I had been on my Scottish island and there were people there who had seen and spoken to me. They would tell Mr Kirwin where I had been. What they said would prove that I was innocent.

I went into the room and looked into the coffin\*. When I saw who was lying there I was so horrified that I forgot where I was and who I was with. I threw myself onto his body.

'My dear Henry!' I cried. 'Have my actions led to your death? Have I destroyed you like I destroyed William and Justine?'

With that, I fell down onto the floor, my body convulsing uncontrollably\*.



For two months I was so ill that I was constantly close to death. I spoke and shouted like a madman. I told everyone that I was the real murderer of William, Justine and Clerval. I repeated that I was the guilty one. I asked and asked the people who were looking after me to help me find the monster who had killed them. It was fortunate that in my madness I spoke in my native language. The only person in the town who could speak German was Mr Kirwin.

Why did I not die then? Why was I saved\*? No one else on the entire\* planet could have suffered as I did. How did I survive this illness, this madness? Unfortunately for me, I did not die and after

coffin wooden box where you put a corpse  
uncontrollably unable to stop or control

saved was kept alive  
entire complete, whole

two months I began to get better. Until then I had not realised where I was, but then I saw that I was lying on a bed in a prison\* room. It was miserable\* and cold.

An old woman and occasionally a doctor were sent to look after me, but they did not do any of this out of kindness. They had been told to do it and had no choice. Mr Kirwin was kinder. I discovered he had put me in the best room in the prison, and although it was not often, he sometimes came to visit me.

I often thought I should tell them that I was guilty. Then I could be hanged for murder like Justine and my sufferings would end. Justine had been more innocent of any crime than I was.



One day, Mr Kirwin came to see me.

'After you became ill, I found some letters in your pocket. I saw that one was from your father so I wrote to him. Two months have passed since I sent my letter and I have come to tell you that he is here.'

When I heard the news I felt happy for the first time in months. My father came into my room, and immediately reassured\* me that everyone at home was well. My father's arrival made me feel a little better, but it could not stop me thinking about the lifeless body of Clerval lying in its coffin.

Three months after I had first landed\* in Ireland new evidence\* arrived at the court. The people on my Scottish island had confirmed that I had been there and so I was released from prison.

**prison** place where criminals are kept  
**miserable** (here) dark and uncomfortable  
**reassured** stopped me from worrying

**landed** arrived somewhere (in a ship, boat or a plane)  
**evidence** information used by the police or in a trial

One thought came into my head, however. I knew that soon I had to stop being so selfish\*, I had to stop myself feeling this despair so that I would be well enough to go home to protect the people I loved. There I would wait for the murderer and there I would kill him. This thought filled my days and my nights.

My father wanted to wait until I was better before letting me start this long journey from Ireland to Switzerland. I was so thin and ill, that I looked like a walking skeleton\*. I was only a shadow\* of a human being. But we did leave.

**selfish** only thinking of yourself, not considering others  
**skeleton** the complete bone structure of an animal or person

**shadow** shape made by an object when the light is behind it