BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

Frankenstein 3: Death in the family



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Language point: Present perfect & yet / just / already

TODAY - IN THE ARCTIC

Viktor Frankenstein

Hello, I'm scientist Viktor Frankenstein – well, I used to be a scientist but I came to hate everything about my job. I was back in the town where I was born, Geneva, after six years at university in Germany. I was brought back by bad news in my father's letter. I found him, and my sweet Elizabeth, very upset. My young brother William had been killed! How? By whom? The police were there too.

IN THE PAST - AT THE FRANKENSTEIN FAMILY HOME

Policeman

We're doing everything we can to find who killed your son, Mr Alphonse Frankenstein.

Viktor Frankenstein's Father

Thank you, detective.

Policeman

Miss Elizabeth, we're sorry about what happened to the boy, we know you're very close to the family.

Elizabeth

Yes.

Policeman

The marks of the killer's fingers that we found on the boy's neck were still fresh. The body was in the woods.

Elizabeth

That's horrible!

Viktor Frankenstein's Father

Calm down, my dear Elizabeth. Sir, we were having a family day out and my son William disappeared.

Policeman

Very unfortunate, Mr Frankenstein. But we've just arrested a suspect.

Viktor Frankenstein's Father

A suspect?! Who killed my boy?

Policeman

Well, we found a valuable locket with the boy's mother's picture in the pocket of one of the nanny's dresses.

Elizabeth

Justine?! It's not possible!

Policeman

I'm sorry, Miss Elizabeth. Justine hasn't explained yet how it got there! Was it stolen?

Elizabeth

But I know she's innocent!

Viktor Frankenstein's Father

Elizabeth my dear, I want to believe that she's innocent, but what about the locket?

Elizabeth

Everyone believes Justine is guilty. I don't. She loved William very much.

TODAY - IN THE ARCTIC

Viktor Frankenstein

Yes, everyone believed Justine had killed William - everyone except Elizabeth and I. Why? Because I knew who the murderer was. On my journey back to Geneva, I saw a very large figure run over the hills and disappear. It was the Creature! It was the murderer! And now, what would happen to poor Justine? She went to trial.

IN THE PAST - IN THE COURTROOM

Prosecutor

Justine, you were out the whole night in which the child was killed, weren't you?

Justine

I've already told the police and everybody else. I paid a visit to my auntie in the village. On my way back I heard people talking about a boy who went missing. It was William. I spent hours looking for him.

Prosecutor

A woman from the market saw you near the place where the child's body was found. What were you doing there?

Justine

I didn't know I was near the place.

Prosecutor

The woman asked you what you were doing there. She said you sounded confused.

Justine

Yes. I was tired and worried about William.

Prosecutor

You went back to the Frankenstein family home in the morning and asked to be told any news about the boy.

Justine

Yes! I've just told you, I was worried about him!

Prosecutor

Or maybe you felt guilty... When shown the body you started to scream!

Justine

Yes. It was horrible! Horrible!

Prosecutor

And you stayed in your bed for several days. That's when someone found this: the boy's locket with a picture of his mother - yes, this very locket - in your dress pocket. How do you explain that?

Justine

I... I... I can't explain!

TODAY - IN THE ARCTIC

Viktor Frankenstein

Poor Justine! But I knew the monster had done something to make her look guilty... Our family was very rich and powerful. The crime was shocking. They had to find someone to blame quickly...

IN THE PAST - IN THE COURTROOM

Judge

Silence! For the murder of the child William Frankenstein on May, the 7th, I sentence Justine Moritz to death!

TODAY - IN THE ARCTIC

Viktor Frankenstein

Justine was innocent but she was executed anyway. I felt that I was guilty of two deaths because I had created the monster! I couldn't eat. I couldn't sleep. So I decided to take long walks in the mountains. That's when I had an unexpected meeting. I'm going to tell you all about it next time.

Vocabulary

upset

to be a mix of sad and angry

suspect

someone who is believed to have committed a crime

locket

a type of necklace with a part that opens and has a picture inside

nanny

a person who works in a house to take care of the children

innocent

someone who has not committed a crime

guilty

someone who has committed a crime

murderer

someone who kills a person by choice

sentence

punishment for a crime, given by a judge

executed

killed by the order of a judge