

*The creature runs through the Arctic ice, pursued by Dr Frankenstein*

What have these blunt fingers touched  
what made this heart beat faster

in the flesh chest that grew it?  
Before they became mine: became

the motley coat that is me?  
Did this palm stroke softer flesh

in reciprocal love? My hands  
(if mine they be through mere possession)

may turn black from the kiss of frost.  
Even these broad splayed toes

propelling me through snow.  
My flesh spreads away from itself,

as if it too finds the latticework  
of my woven skin disgusting.

He chases me now, a blind dog  
chained to me by loathing.

Yet he sewed these fingers  
with his own. These toes he assayed

as a surveyor uses an alidade  
to map continents, or mere streets.

He loved the precious detail,  
retracts himself from the whole,

and would smear me on the ice.  
Me, the only one ever born

without a mother, made  
by pure scientific fumbling.

And so we run. Always north.  
This sharpened North

tears my skin with teeth  
always all its own. My own teeth

tasted flesh I never saw;  
this tongue may speak languages

that even he can't speak.  
I am the king of second-hand

The prince of second-feet.

*A vision from the future appears to the creature as he runs*

## Vacanti's mouse

The nude mouse grows  
a human ear on its back,  
seeded with a herd of  
cartilage cow cells.  
Is the mouse still a mouse  
carting this foreign flap  
elephantine on its spine?  
Does the person who  
wears the cowmouseear  
listen for the rampage  
behind the rhubarb of chat?  
If she chews gum,  
does a rumen erupt  
inside, like Ripley's  
puissant alien?  
Monstrous the tales  
for such an ear;  
Monstrous the listening.

Every sound an echo of an echo  
straining to hear a progenitor.

*The creature sees a projection of moving pictures upon the ice,  
in which another monster appears.*

*He begins to understand that he is immortal.*

The rough beast reaches Bethlehem every day, and  
Calvary, too

He wears metal  
pushed through skin;  
difference imprinted, nay,  
sculpted into him;  
subtle as a railway.

The monster's bolts  
to receive electricity  
were implanted there  
in 1931. Etymologically  
apt, the makeup man's  
name was Jack Pierce.

This creature is Saint Sebastian,  
pierced by too little love.  
A second coming,  
nails driven into neck,  
not hands; this original  
replicant, continually reborn.

This creature, begotten son of science,  
and a woman called Mary,  
(born of her unseen mother Mary)  
is constantly betrayed.  
Constantly crucified.  
An echo of an echo.

This is the bolt that Jack built.  
This is the neck, pierced

by knowledge,  
his skin a book beyond mere tattoo;  
impressed...even more deeply.  
Print, skin, and hot metal are one.  
He rises again and again,  
resurrected by celluloid.

He is found wanting by the court,  
the Hollywood court of beauty;  
is hoisted again in 3D.

I am this same monster  
of thick tongue and poor diction,  
stumbling through an electric world.

Escape is never a possibility.  
You read me into being again  
as you hold this thin, icy book.

Read my footprints;  
the impression lingers.