

MARY SHELLEY
Episode #6 Transcript
Written by Gabrielle Mirabella
Music by Ernie Bird

“KIDS LISTEN” ADVERTISEMENT

INTRO MUSIC.

GABRIELLE: Hello! And welcome to another *frightful* episode of “What will she do next?”

THUNDER CRASH!

CREEPY MUSIC!

I’m your host Gabrielle Mirabella and together with composer Ernie Bird, (**ERNIE:** Hello!) we’ve created a podcast that celebrates some of our *favorite* historical women! Today’s episode offers a friendly warning: *Never judge a book by it’s cover.*

Spooky-scary noises: cat, witch laugh, etc...

This episode was written & narrated by myself with music & production by Ernie Bird (**ERNIE:** Hello!) Our featured guest stars include: Sarah Smith, T.J. Newton and Jacob Hoffman. And playing today’s leading role we have ...(**GEORGIA:** Georgia Kate Haege. Hi, guys!)

GABRIELLE & ERNIE: Enjoy!

GABRIELLE: Are you feeling...stuck? Does the challenge presented before you seem pretty “unsolvable”? Or, perhaps, like many of us right now, you feel confined; with no place to go, no room to grow? Well, don’t worry, you’re not alone.

Join us, as we investigate seemingly “impossible” situations from the lives of history’s most famous women, and ask ourselves...what *will* she do next?

THEME SONG PLAYS:

“What will she do next?

What will she do next?

Her aim is true but will she see it through?

Oh, what will she do... next?”

GABRIELLE: Today’s historical woman: Mary Shelley. Author of the legendary novel, “Frankenstein”.

Now, before she gets too “stuck”, let’s see where she’s coming from...

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GABRIELLE: Mary Shelley was born August 30th, 1797 to feminist author Mary Wollstonecraft, and political philosopher William Godwin. The family shared a comfortable home together in London, England with Wollstonecraft's first daughter, Fanny. But, not soon after Mary's birth, her Mother, author of *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, became seriously ill and passed away.

After some time, Mary's Father remarried, and the Godwin household began to grow. Mary, and Fanny welcomed new stepmother Mary Jane, younger step-sister Jane, step-brother Charles, and soon after they were joined by little brother, William.

JANE + WILLIAM laughing.

JANE: I've got you, William!

WILLIAM: Not fair, Jane! I tagged you first!

JANE: Oh, stop blubbering. Mary is there, catch *her!*

GABRIELLE: While the many Godwin children bounced around the house, Mary instead found great pleasure in simply sitting by the window and thinking.

Musical theme begins.

GABRIELLE: On the outside, she appeared frozen, as if enchanted by a magic spell.

WILLIAM: Mary, what are you doing?

GABRIELLE: But, on the inside, she wrote in her journal, she felt as if she were living in a "waking dream"; A secret hideaway where she was free to create worlds, and characters, stories and even nightmares.

JANE: Mary, come play!

GABRIELLE: That is, when there weren't any interruptions.

WILLIAM + JANE: Mary!

Musical theme ends.

MARY: *(back to reality)* Oh! Sorry. I was...um...thinking.

JANE + WILLIAM giggle.

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GABRIELLE: Despite the madness of siblings and girlhood, or perhaps because of it, Mary spent her teenage years studying abroad in Scotland where she could devote many quiet hours to reading and writing.

And, at the age of fifteen she met and fell in love with a young poet named Percy Shelley. A few years later the two were married, and together with sister Jane, the group traveled across Europe, meeting with great writers, poets and artists of their day.

And, in the summer of 1816, when Mary was eighteen-years-old, the trio journeyed to Switzerland, where they found themselves at the doorstep of the famed English poet, Lord Byron.

LORD BYRON: Oh, you flatter me.

THUNDER CRASH.

LORD BYRON: Please do come in!

GABRIELLE: Mary slid through the doorway of Byron's grand mansion, absorbing the wonderful and terrifying details of her surroundings.

LORD BYRON: *You* must be Mary Shelley... Mother, Wife, daughter to England's greatest writers.

PERCY: She's a writer too, you know!

GABRIELLE: Mary's husband, Percy, cut in.

PERCY: She's always scribbling away in her journals.

JANE: Yes, *but* we never know *what* she's writing. Do we?

GABRIELLE: Sister Jane replied.

JANE: She's far too *polite* to share.

PERCY: She is just a bit *shy* is all.

LORD BYRON: And, what does *Mary* think of this?

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MARY: Oh! Well, I...

Musical theme begins.

JANE: Go on, Mary.

MARY: I, um...

LORD BYRON: Yes?

MARY: I, uh...would love a look around!

THUNDER CRASH, ending the musical theme.

LORD BYRON: Of course. Right this way...

MARY SINGS.

MARY:
MARY IS POLITE.
MARY IS TOO SHY.
MARY IS THE ODD ONE OF THE GROUP TONIGHT.

(spoken) What's wrong with me? I have so much to say! But, when I speak, I freeze. Cold and still. Like an iceberg.

Back to reality.

BYRON: What is Mary doing?

JANE: She's *thinking*, my Lord.

BYRON: Oh? I wonder what about...

MARY:
THEY SEE ME SITTING SILENT AND FORMAL.
BRUSHING ME ASIDE AS QUITE NORMAL.
LITTLE DO THEY KNOW THAT IT'S ALL A FACADE, NOTHING REAL.

INSIDE IS SOMETHING DIFFERENT, MUCH STRANGER.
INVOLUNTARY CRAVINGS FOR DANGER.

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SECRETS I AM HIDING, ARE FULLY REVEALED IN MY MIND.
HERE I FIND!

Now entering Mary's imagination.

A RAGING STORM! A BLINDING LIGHT!
CURIOUS THOUGHTS THAT RACE INSIDE ME.
A MASSIVE FORM. AN ENDLESS NIGHT.
LET THEM COMBINE! LET THEM REVEAL!

A CHAOTIC REALM OF UNENDING SURPRISE
WHERE MADNESS IS JUST STATUS QUO.
HOW CAN I SHOW THE MANY PIECES OF ME?

Back to reality.

JANE: Perhaps we'll go riding in the morning!

PERCY: Weather permitting, of course.

LORD BYRON: Hm, yes. The weather.

MARY:

I TRY TO PAY ATTENTION. I LISTEN.
SMILING ALL THROUGHOUT THIS CONVERSATION,
EVEN THOUGH THE TOPIC IS DREADFULLY DULL, AND DEMURE.

I'D RATHER SOMETHING GHOULISH, AND CHILLING
STORIES MADE FOR THINKING AND THRILLING.
QUESTIONS THAT CONSUME YOU, THAT LEAVE YOU UNSURE OF YOUR MIND.
THERE I FIND!

A FEVER DREAM! A WICKED SOUL!
MENACING THOUGHTS THAT LIVE INSIDE ME.
A FIENDISH SCHEME! A DEADLY GOAL!
HOW THEY COMBINE! HOW THEY REVEAL!

A CHAOTIC PLACE OF DELIGHT AND SURPRISE
I ENTER, THEN LEAVE WANTING MORE!
I CAN'T IGNORE THE MANY PIECES OF ME.

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IF I COULD SHOW THEM,
SHOW THEM WHAT'S INSIDE
THE ME INSIDE.
WOULD THEY RUN AND HIDE?
OR, WOULD I FIN'LLY COME ALIVE?
COME ALIVE! COME ALIVE!

Back to reality.

PERCY: May we view the library?

LORD BRYON: Please. Shall we invite, Mary?

JANE: Best not disturb her.

MARY:
A SILLY GIRL. WITH CRAZY DREAMS.
WHY DO THEY COME? WHY WON'T THEY GO?

THUNDER CRASH!

TAP, TAP, CREAK...TAP, TAP, CREAK...

JANE: *(so dramatic)* What was that?

PERCY: 'Twas the storm, Jane.

TAP, TAP, CREAK...

JANE: No, there! On the window! 'Tis an evil witch!

LORD BRYON: A witch, you say? Or, perhaps it is a hungry hound, thirsting for blood!

PERCY: Or, a spirit lost in the storm!

BYRON & PERCY laugh.

JANE: Stop! *Stop!* You'll scare me more!

Mary enters the room.

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PERCY: And here comes Mary! Tell us, what monster lies beyond the glass?

Musical theme begins.

MARY: I...um...

JANE: Not this again.

Musical theme abruptly ends.

LORD BYRON: I have an idea! One, I think, Mary will enjoy... I propose a game!

MARY: A game?

JANE: *I love games!*

PERCY: Which one? Cards? Chess?

LORD BYRON: Nothing like that. I propose a ghost story. Each of us will write one, then present them to the group.

JANE: How wicked!

PERCY: Here's your chance to write, Mary! Doesn't that sound exciting?

MARY: Yes. Exciting...

TRANSITION MUSIC.

GABRIELLE: With her assignment in tow, Mary retired to her chambers to begin writing.

MARY: Here is my chance to put dreams into words.

GABRIELLE: Mary thought, dipping her pen into the vial of black ink.

MARY: If I begin, who knows *where* my stories will take me! But...

GABRIELLE: Mary hesitated, listening to the storm outside.

Wind, rain.

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MARY: If I truly write what I feel, my friends and family will think me mad! Utterly, and hopelessly mad.... Pray, what will I do?

UPBEAT MUSIC.

GABRIELLE: Good question, Mary... What *will* you do?
But, before we find out, let's first take a look at her options....
Will Mary choose option 1?:

MARY: I'm no writer like Percy, or Lord Byron. I'll just sit back and listen.

GABRIELLE: Or, will she choose option 2?:

MARY: How about I write my story, then when they ask I'll say the dog ate it!

GABRIELLE: Or, will she choose option 3?:

TAP, TAP, CREAK...

MARY: That noise *is* horrid. Like an undead monster seeking his revenge. Hm. Perhaps, I'll start with that...

GABRIELLE: Now that we can clearly see her options, which one do YOU think she will choose? Take a moment to think it over...

THINKING MUSIC.

GABRIELLE: Alright, got your answer? Now, let's find out which option Mary will choose...

THUNDER CRASH!

LORD BYRON: (*a dramatic recitation*)
"The sun was sinking--still I lay
Chained to the chill and stiffening steed,
I thought to mingle there our clay;
And my dim eyes of death had need,
No hope arose of being freed."

Polite claps.

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LORD BYRON: You're too kind.

JANE: That was dreadful, my Lord! I doubt I'll sleep a wink!

PERCY: I'll have to agree with Jane.

LORD BYRON: Alright Mary, we've all gone. Do *you* have a story?

MARY: I...um...

Musical theme begins.

JANE: What a surprise.

Musical theme intensifies.

MARY: I...

PERCY: It's okay if you don't.

MARY: I...

LORD BYRON: Perhaps we can start a new game.

Musical theme reaches a fever-pitch.

MARY: Wait! I *have* thought of a story...

"It was a dreary night in November, that I beheld the accomplishment of my toils. The rain pattered dismally against the panes, and my candle was nearly burnt out, when, by the glimmer of the half-extinguished light I saw the full yellow eyes of the creature open; it breathed hard, and a convulsive motion agitated it's limbs."

The GROUP gasps!

PERCY: That was...

LORD BYRON: That was...

JANE: That was horrifying, Mary! I'll never sleep again!

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LORD BYRON: My girl, where did you find such inspiration?

MARY:

THIS RAGING STORM! THE BLINDING LIGHT.
ALL THE WONDERFUL THOUGHTS THAT LIVE INSIDE ME.
THEY'VE TAKEN FORM, TAKEN FLIGHT.
NOW THEY COMBINE! NOW THEY REVEAL!

A CHAOTIC REALM OF UNENDING SURPRISE
MY VISIONS WILL NOT GO TO WASTE!
I WILL EMBRACE THE MANY PIECES,

I WON'T HIDE THE MANY PIECES OF ME!
THE COMPLEX, MESS OF PIECES OF ME!
THEY WILL FINALLY SEE!
I LOVE ALL THE PIECES OF ME!
PIECES OF ME! PIECES OF ME!

GABRIELLE: Mary Shelley was faced with a seemingly impossible situation. But, instead of hiding her unique visions, she shared them with the world; forever shaping the course of modern literature.

So, the next time you find yourself feeling “stuck”, I wonder...what will *you* do next?

KID'S CORNER MUSIC.

GABRIELLE: At the end of every episode we will be featuring a very special guest star...*you!*
Today we have Adelaide from New York.

GABRIELLE & ERNIE: Hi, Adelaide!

GABRIELLE: Tell us all about your favorite historical woman!

ADELAIDE: My favorite historical woman is Amelia Earhart. She was born on July 25th 1897 in Atchison, Kansas. Amelia Earhart is most famous for being the first woman to fly across the Atlantic Ocean by herself. At that time flying was a big accomp for anybody, especially a woman. Amelia inspires me because she was determined to do what she loved most and do as best as she could. She saved up money and with her Mom's help she took flying lessons and later bought her own airplane. She nicknamed it “Canary” because it was bright yellow. Amelia also set records for female-flyers in altitude. She also became a university professor in

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aeronautics. Later, she was the first woman vice-president of the U.S. National Aeronautics Association. She encouraged other women to fly. In addition to being a female aviator, she designed a line of women's clothing using her own sewing machine.

End of Episode.