

In a mental hospital, he is questioned, while wearing a straight jacket, by the medical staff. The DOCTOR takes a flask out of TR's straight jacket and wags his finger disapprovingly. He goes to a cabinet, takes out a bottle, and hands it to TR. It reads: "Hoodwink's Patented Cure-All Elixir and Day-Dream Remedy. 99.7% Brandy."

TR pulls up to his home on Long Island in a carriage, where his wife greets and hugs him. She asks him something, worried. He shrugs and points behind his carriage to another cart pulling up, full of cash, labeled "HOODWINK'S MEDICINE SHOW AND QUACK SUNDRIES," driven by a grinning CRAZY GUY.

FADE TO BLACK.

**INT. TESLA'S LAB - MORNING**

**TESLA** coolly enters from a room still buzzing and flashing with electricity, with all his hair standing on end.

He goes to a chalkboard with a complex schematic on it, including the phrase, "10,000 volts," from which he erases one of the zeroes.

He sits at his desk, combing the last of his hair down, and picks up the newspaper.

The headline reads: "Cowardly Cracked-Pot Colonel Claims 'Corpse Corps' in Kuba."

TESLA

(DERISIVE) Cuba with a "K"... Pushing  
the limits of our new linotype machine  
aren't we, New York Daily Journal?

Below the headline is a ridiculous wood-cut illustration of TR cowering from vampires and a Spaniard.

As he reads, Tesla strokes a small Van der Graf generator like a lap dog, causing his hair to raise and fall.

TR (V.O.)

"The soldiers would fall with each hit,  
then rise again in hell-born vengeance.

(MORE)

TR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

It's enough to strike the stoutest  
soldier dumb with fear. I should not  
like to face them again."

Tesla smiles.

**EXT. ROOSEVELT HOUSE - BACK YARD - LATER**

TR chops wood in the back yard. His wife, **EDITH**, appears in the back door and calls to him.

EDITH

Teddy! There's a Mr. Tesla to see you!

TR

(STILL CHOPPING) A Mr. Who?

EDITH

Tesla! The electrician.

TR

You mean that mealy-mouthed, basement-  
dwelling, fancy-pants--

TR turns and sees Tesla standing beside his wife.

TESLA

The same.

TR

(SARCASTIC) Well show him in, Edith.

He grabs Tesla's hand and shakes it too hard.

TR (CONT'D)

A pleasure. Don't mind if I chop wood  
while you talk. Keeps my head clear.

He takes a swig from his medicine bottle.

TESLA

(COLLECTING HIMSELF) Ah, the mark of  
sanity. Go right ahead. What-- are you  
chopping wood... with wood?

Reveal TR is using a split log to split other logs.

TR

I like a fair fight. Go on. (CHOPS)

TESLA

Well, you might've guessed I've come to  
talk to you about your famous "rising  
dead" of San Juan Hill, Colonel.

TR looks up, scowling.

TESLA (CONT'D)

(GRINS) I think we can help each other.  
Have ever you read Mary Shelley's  
"Frankenstein?" Wherein a corpse is  
brought back to life with electricity?

TR

(BITTER) "Yes, I've read Frankenstein."  
"No, I'm not trying to write a sequel."  
"No, YOU sound crazy..." (TAKES A SWIG)

Tesla swats away TR's bottle and pulls a book from his  
jacket, waving it at TR. The cover has on it the word  
"Frankenstein", with "Notes" hand-written below it.

TESLA

You should have read more closely, I  
think. You see, Colonel--

TR swats the book out of Tesla's hand.

TR

Stop calling me "Colonel!" I was  
stripped of that rank in disgrace.  
(BELCHES) Now go pick up my Hoodwink's  
Patented Cure-All whatsit and take  
your...*PITY*...elsewhere!

Beat. Tesla is unmoved.

TESLA

I think you should come with me.

**EXT. LONG ISLAND ROADWAY - DAY**

TR and Tesla board Tesla's electric car and zoom off.

**INSERT: OLD TIMEY ROAD MAP - LONG ISLAND TO MANHATTAN**

A little icon of TR and Tesla in the car traces a route to  
Tesla's lab in Manhattan.

**INT. TESLA'S LAB - LATER**

TR and Tesla enter.

TR

So this is where you keep your pity?

TESLA

Theodore, I wonder if you've been  
following the news lately.

TR

Cuba with a K? I saw it. Alliteration  
and linotypes don't mix.

TESLA

Agreed. But if ever you looked past the front page, you'd notice a number of small, half-buried reports of dead returning to life nationwide, shortly after the introduction of electricity! Until now dismissed as the ravings of drunks or untrustworthy rural folk!

TR

(PUTS DOWN BOTTLE MID-SWIG) Until now?

NIKOLA TESLA

Until you, Theodore. Others may not believe you, but I was ready! You may be...*rural*...but you're trustworthy. Let the medicine men doubt you and sell you their overpriced quack remedies--

TR looks at his bottle.

NIKOLA TESLA (CONT'D)

--but I don't doubt that you saw what you say you saw. And if I'm right, if "Frankenstein" is right, we'll have quite the scourge of living dead on our hands very shortly.

TR puts down his bottle and absentmindedly toys with an old-timey Rock 'Em Sock 'Em Robots prototype as he talks.

TR

So what's the plan.

TESLA

Plan? (RE: ROBOT TOY:) Careful with that, that's a prototype.

TR

You didn't bring me here just to corroborate Sunday supplement drivel.

TESLA

Indeed, no. Tomorrow there is an expedition to the arctic leaving New York Harbor... weather permitting. You will be on this voyage, and you will bring me back Frankenstein's monster!

TR

(SHOCKED) You shooting crooked, Tesla? There are scores of things wrong with that idea! Among the most troubling are: One, the monster must be long dead, if it's even real. Two, most arctic expeditions never return. Three, why me? Four, everything else! It's a crock. A total crock!

TESLA

(GOADING) Yes, I figured you'd be afraid. It's only natural after your scare in Cuba, where you seem to have met your match, such as it was...

TR begins to steam with frustration, getting madder as Tesla goes on deliberately needling him.

## TESLA (CONT'D)

A living corpse with its humanity still intact could help us to greatly expand our understanding! But I can see why you wouldn't want to go on an arctic adventure. They are scary and unpredictable. Really just for manly men. Adventurous men, who aren't afraid of every little--

TR PUNCHES through the Rock 'Em Sock 'Em Robots game in anger, sending the robots' heads flying through the air.

**EXT. PORT OF NEW YORK - DOCK - THE NEXT DAY**

TR stands on the deck of the arctic clipper as it leaves the dock, wearing a giant parka, a pack, and holding a pennant that reads "Arctic". He looks determined.

**INSERT: OLD TIMEY OCEAN CHART - EASTERN SEABOARD TO ARCTIC**

An icon featuring the ship, TR, and the "Arctic" pennant makes its way up the coast and past the Arctic Circle.

**EXT. ARCTIC ICE - DAY**

The Cutter, "U.S.S. Doomseeker," emerges from white fog, breaking ice as it goes.

**EXT. ARCTIC CUTTER DECK - SAME**

TR is on the deck looking forward, holding what looks like a large, modified compass. It DINGS and BUZZES at constant intervals. **CAPTAIN WELLMAN** approaches him.

CAPTAIN WELLMAN

Ahoy there, Mr. Roosevelt?

TR

Is the boiler back on? Tell me the boiler is back on, Captain.

CAPTAIN WELLMAN

Aye, nay. The mate flung it overboard,  
the mutinous wretch. But I'll be damned  
if I turn back! Never turn back!

Angry beat.

TR

How is the ship going to move if we  
don't have a boiler.

CAPTAIN WELLMAN

Aye, 't isn't.

INSERT: Wide shot of the boat not moving.

TR

(SIGHS) Well, what do you want then.

CAPTAIN WELLMAN

Oh, aye... Oh. Hmm. Well, we were out  
of coal and I was gonna ask if we could  
throw your box there in the boiler.  
Seems kind of pointless now...

TR

Agreed.

CAPTAIN WELLMAN

So what does it do, your box.

TR

Not sure how it works, but it's  
supposed to detect electric fields. And  
I'm looking for the only electric field  
in the arctic.

INSERT of the arrow on the box pointing away from the ship.

TR (CONT'D)

Guess I'm on foot from here.

He picks up his pack and looks over the side of the boat, where he sees a number of ZOMBIES - comprised of dead crewmen from earlier arctic expeditions - climbing the side.

TR (CONT'D)

Did not expect that!

TR runs back as Captain Wellman looks over and is pulled overboard by one of the zombies.

CAPTAIN WELLMAN

Aye, down I go!

The zombies climbing the ship cause the ice around it to crack, and the ship now sways left and right with some ice still attached to it.

TR climbs down a rope on the other side of the ship. A zombie approaches, but is CRUSHED by a cannon falling off the ship. TR looks up and sees more cannons and other large objects sliding off the ship as it tilts more and more.

TR hops from the ship's ice onto more solid ground as the ship finally tilts too far and capsizes - taking all the crew and zombies under the ice.

TR surveys the damage for a moment, then looks down at his electric field detector, which BEEPS. He starts walking.

**EXT. ARCTIC ICE - DUSK**

TR, now in a block of ice, trudges through the snow.

The electric field detector, also in the ice, suddenly begins alternating between two directions.

TR

Aw, what? (TURNS AROUND, THEN BACK)

Grr... Electrical age be damned!

He sits down and waits. The compass still dings and buzzes.

The compass arrow settles on pointing behind TR. He tries to turn his head but can't.

Suddenly, a harpoon flies in and shatters the block of ice around TR.

TR quickly stands and turns, ready to fight, only to have a rope net flung over him, again immobilizing him.

TR (CONT'D)

The devil? Stop this!

FRANK (O.S.)

Oh, I'm sorry...

TR looks up and sees **FRANK** walking towards him. Frank helps free TR from the net.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I thought you were a walrus! Or, you know, one of the zombies.

TR

Zombies?

FRANK

You know, the living dead. It's a voodoo term. I read about it in a book left by one of the countless ships that come up here to get stuck and die.

They begin walking. A shy beat.

TR

If I were dead, or just snow-mad and hallucinating... you'd tell me, right?

FRANK

Well, I'd be the one to ask. You aren't like the other dead people I've met.

TR

Ditto.

FRANK

At any rate, I'm glad to have met you.  
Come by the igloo to warm up! Most men  
couldn't survive out here this long.

TR

(CHUCKLES TO HIMSELF) True.

**EXT./ESTAB. FRANK'S IGLOO - LATER**

Frank and TR approach the igloo, which has a taller-than-usual entryway due to Frank's height.

**INT. FRANK'S IGLOO - LATER**

TR enters first and is met by **IGOR**, a miniature creature that seems to be half vegetable and half snowman.

IGOR

Welcome back--

TR

Ahh!

TR instinctively kicks Igor across the room, sending his limbs flying off. Frank enters behind TR.

FRANK

Ahh! What have you done to Igor?

TR

That garbage can talked to me!

Frank crosses the room and begins reassembling Igor.

FRANK

It's not a garbage can, it's my valet,  
Igor. One of Victor Frankenstein's  
early attempts at reanimation.

(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)

I took him with me when I left civilization, and I've tried to maintain him as best I can, with whatever I can find...

Frank finally puts Igor's head back on.

FRANK (CONT'D)

There. Good as refurbished.

IGOR

Welcome ba-- oh, did it happen again?

TR

Fascinating and also tedious. (RUBS HANDS) Okay, I'm warm enough: Let's go.

He turns to exit.

FRANK

Wait, go where? You've just arrived!

IGOR

And I've got tea on!

TR

Igor can stay. Frank, you've got to come with me. We need your help.

FRANK

(DISAPPOINTED) Oh, I figured as much! I should've known those rabid mindless creatures were the by-products of some mad scientist getting out of his depth!

TR

Listen... "Frank," I guess... The world has filled with electricity since you left. The dead are rising just as a matter of course. Mankind cannot survive without taming these beasts!

TR picks up his teacup and attempts to drink, then lowers his hand, with the teacup still stuck to his moustache.

TR (CONT'D)

The tea's gone cold.

Igor gingerly detaches the teacup and sits on it like a hen.

IGOR

Be a minute.

TR

(TO FRANK) I'm told you're the only one who would know how electricity has this effect on the mind. With your help we could learn how to prevent this, or at least to preserve the humanity of the zombies we do create.

IGOR

(OUT OF NOWHERE) Oh, chestnuts! I forgot I don't generate body heat. I'll just go fire up the kettle.

TR

(FROWNING; TO FRANK:) In the meantime, I've seen them in battle, and you could be a great asset to us there as well.

FRANK

Ha! No. I'm strictly pacifist. Fighting only leads to hurt feelings and tears. No, I haven't so much as raised a fist in anger in almost a century!

TR grumbles, then stands and rolls up his sleeves.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Self-defense, of course, is another matter entirely. I mean, we'll get the occasional hungry polar bear, and well--

TR puts up his dukes and rushes Frank, fist drawn back.

SMASH CUT TO:

**EXT. FRANK'S IGLOO - CONTINUOUS**

TR blasts through the roof of the igloo and lands in the snow several yards away, broken and bruised.

TR

(COUGHING) Wh-- th... b... (SPITS OUT TOOTH, SMILING) Bully! (CHUCKLES)

TR looks up and sees a POLAR BEAR tower over him, ROARING.

**INT. FRANK'S IGLOO - LATER**

The polar bear is now roasting over the fire on a spit.

TR huddles next to the fire, heavily bandaged but smiling, and eating a piece of meat off a bone. Igor walks over to him with a new cup of tea.

IGOR

Some more tea, Mr. Walrus. Sorry it--

TR steps on Igor's foot, lifting Igor's head like a trash can lid, exposing a hole in his torso.

IGOR (CONT'D)

What--

TR tosses his cleaned bone into the hole and takes his foot off Igor's, closing Igor's head.

IGOR (CONT'D)

Huh. What an odd sensation!

Igor waddles off, body kept straight by the bone.

Frank enters carrying a large block of ice.

FRANK

This should help keep the swelling down  
on your wounds.

He is about to place it on TR's head, but reconsiders.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Maybe I'll just let it melt a little.

TR

I don't blame you for hating humanity.  
After we drove you away by torch and  
pitchfork. But if you really are more  
man than monster, you'll help us.

FRANK

I don't hate humanity, but I know it  
well. If I give you an inch, you'll  
take a mile. Which I guess is why I  
moved thousands of miles away...

TR

The way the world is advancing, it's  
only a matter of time before there's no  
place you can hide.

(MORE)

TR (CONT'D)

I fear technology is advancing even faster than we're ready for. (BEAT) As evidenced by the zombies. (LONG BEAT) I don't know if I can even go back and face them. Not many things scare me.

FRANK

(THINKS) If I do go with you - lend you my expertise - then that's it. Just stop the zombies, and I go home. I will not help you create more of me, or play God in any sense of the word. Deal?

TR

Of course. I'll see to it personally.

**EXT. ICE FLOE - THE NEXT DAY**

TR and Frank stand on a small ice floe as Igor kick-pedals the water for locomotion, giggling and making motor noises.

**INSERT: OLD TIMEY MAP - EASTERN SEABOARD TO ARCTIC**

A small icon of TR, Frank and Igor on an iceberg makes its way down from the arctic to New York via the Hudson River.

**EXT. CHELSEA PIERS - DAY**

An exhausted Igor pushes the partly melted-away ice flow into one of the docks. On the pier, Frank and TR spot a horde of zombie longshoremen waiting for them.

TR SHRIEKS in surprise and fear.

TR

(COVERING) I mean... "Look at that!"  
Cripes, it's gotten even worse...

FRANK

(SCARED) What do we do?!

IGOR

Allow me, gentlemen!

Igor runs forward and leaps into the horde, but is instantly batted back into the river.

FRANK

Igor!

TR

Leave him! We must try and fight them!

Frank grabs his head in pain, wincing and groaning.

FRANK

My brain...hurting... Can't...think...

TR

Come on, man, at least have the decency to admit when you're just afraid!

FRANK

You...don't...fighting...either...

TR looks to the zombies, then back to Frank - realizing he's still more afraid than he admits, too. Frank groans in pain.

TR

Well I can't do it all alone! They--  
They've beaten me before. And they  
might just kill me if you don't h--

Frank suddenly ROARS to life - no longer in control of his brain. He pushes TR over and runs toward the horde.

TR (CONT'D)

Hey, what the devil? I was talking!

Frank plows through the zombies, tearing them apart and throwing them around the pier with ease. This draws most of the zombies away from TR.

TR looks from Frank to the top of the seawall, where he notices Tesla, pointing a large, sparking, electrical cannon contraption at Frank.

TR (CONT'D)

(ANGRY) What?! Tesla!

He starts to move, but his way is blocked by zombies.

Frank dispatches the last of the zombies on shore and plods toward Tesla and his machine like the old movie monster.

When he reaches Tesla, he rears up, ready to attack.

TR (CONT'D)

Frank, no!

In the nick of time, Tesla whips out a cattle prod and SHOCKS Frank unconscious. He falls down onto Tesla's electric flatbed truck, and they all drive off.

Tesla waves goodbye to TR, mockingly.

TR (CONT'D)

What!! I don't... Why did... GRRR...

He notices the zombies closing in on him. Some of the rest of the horde begin returning to life and heading towards him as well. Breathing heavily, TR rolls up his sleeves.

TR (CONT'D)

Do what you can, with what you have...

Where you are.

He picks up an anchor and brandishes it menacingly.

Wide shot of TR facing off against a large horde of zombies.

TR (CONT'D)

Frank, I'm on my way!

TR dives into the horde, swinging the anchor - his old self again - as we:

BLACKOUT.

END OF PART ONE