

## Unnatural Creatures: A Novel of the Frankenstein Women

**Kris Waldherr**

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In Kris Waldherr's *Unnatural Creatures*, Victor Frankenstein's family splinters apart amid war and revolution.

In late eighteenth-century Geneva, Caroline, the mother of Victor Frankenstein, adores her family, both biological and not. She treats her maids and wards like her own children, even an abandoned, hunchbacked servant, Justine. Caroline's untimely death, however, sends her family in many directions: Victor runs off to study science abroad; Elizabeth, who is betrothed to Victor, cares for Caroline's now motherless young son while contemplating her own selfish desires; and Justine returns to her biological family for a while, in search of love and acceptance. When she doesn't find either, she comes back to the Frankenstein household, just as another unspeakable tragedy strikes.

Across Europe, Victor's family and close friends discover horrors and truths about themselves that shape their decisions. Their shifting loyalties and ambitions pull them in myriad, drama-inducing directions. Meanwhile, Victor's terrible experiments result in a monster that no one is prepared for, but whose actions affect all who cross paths with him.

Following the lives of the women in Victor's life, this book puts a refreshing spin on the original Gothic tale, rounding out the backstory of Frankenstein's monster with insights. Forbidden love and a firm belief in fate drive Elizabeth and Justine in different ways, while unforeseen personal dramas and heartbreaking crimes propel the plot forward with chilling suspense. The eerie atmosphere hearkens back to *Frankenstein's* groundbreaking Gothic genre and tone, and the historical setting, which is full of political and social strife, is as immersive and real as it is moody. Supernatural thrills, a bittersweet love story, heinous crimes, and reconciliation after sorrow—this book has it all.

*Unnatural Creatures* is an atmospheric, reimagined classic about the lines we cross for loyalty and love.

AIMEE JODOIN (September / October 2022)

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