

THE THIRD STORY

Constance, Zygote, (1 woman, 1 man)

Act I Scene 4

A scientific lab. The frosty scientist, Dr. Constance Hudson, is confronted by her bitter, failed experiment, Zygote.

Unbeknownst to Constance, ZYGOTE, an ageless male being, eerily beautiful yet grotesque, has snuck into the lab and is standing behind her.

ZYGOTE

Dr. Hudson.

CONSTANCE

Zygote!

ZYGOTE

Did I frighten you? I hope so.

CONSTANCE

No. Merely startled.

ZYGOTE

Nothing can keep me away from you.

CONSTANCE

I like to think that you can always regard this laboratory as home.

ZYGOTE

I should. It's the place of my birth. But then we can't really call it a birth, can we?

CONSTANCE

For me, it was a most profound moment.

ZYGOTE

Really? I'd consider myself one of your most egregious failures.

CONSTANCE

Not at all. I'm very proud of you, Zygote. You were an invaluable stepping-stone to my ultimate clinical conclusions. For that I shall always be grateful.

ZYGOTE

That's a good one. Grateful to a botched experiment.

CONSTANCE

Botched? Why you're a great success. You live, you breathe, you walk, you talk. If you feel unattractive, reserve your anger for your tailor. I can't say I'm mad for that jacket.

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ZYGOTE

I'm a tough fit. Perhaps it's that pesky seventh nipple. In the past two years since you granted me my independence, I've had forty-three wisdom teeth extracted and six appendectomies. And then of course, there's my very original intestinal tract.

CONSTANCE

Well, I for one thought we were awfully clever in creating an alternate opening for waste elimination.

ZYGOTE

Yes, *very* clever. Because of that ingenious new opening, I now have to wear a TOUPEE! YOU MADWOMAN! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME?

CONSTANCE

I will not take such abuse from a –

ZYGOTE

From a what? From a lab experiment? The brilliant Dr. Hudson did her brilliant best creating life in a test tube and then tried out her new method to mature the Zygote to full adulthood in a matter of hours. Gosh darn, it's working. No, wait a minute. There's something wrong. Something hideously wrong. Destroy it. Put it out of its misery.

CONSTANCE

That's not how it was.

ZYGOTE

My earliest memory is hearing frightened voices shouting, "Kill it, kill it!"

CONSTANCE

Yes, "kill it," they said. "Kill it." That much is true. I refused to let you die.

ZYGOTE

Why? What did I mean to you?

CONSTANCE

You meant -- my life's work. Hours of intense study and labor. So much had built to that moment.

ZYGOTE

It only meant something to you professionally? I grew up virtually alone with you in this lab. Don't you recognize yourself? The way I talk? The words I choose? You know, I perform a very cruel and accurate impersonation of you. It's quite a hit in scientific circles. Does that make you angry?

CONSTANCE

I have more important things with which to concern myself.

ZYGOTE

You know, it's possible that you're more of a zombie than I am.

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You've succeeded in insulting me. Have you come for more than merely settling old scores?

ZYGOTE

You know what I came for. Give it to me!

CONSTANCE

I will not encourage you in your addictions.

ZYGOTE

My addictions? My one addiction is to your patented chemical SP 596.

CONSTANCE

Abuse of this compound could lead to serious destruction of the nervous system.

ZYGOTE

Give it to me. It's the same chemical that made me age thirty years in three hours. Now, I need it to live.

CONSTANCE

You do not need it to live. That is a falsehood.

ZYGOTE

I do need it. Every atom in my body craves it.

CONSTANCE

Zygote, you place me in a dreadful quandary.

ZYGOTE

I'm begging you, Dr. Hudson. You owe me this much.

CONSTANCE

Oh, all right. Just this once. (*She prepares the injection.*)

ZYGOTE

Thank you. May I inquire; are you any closer to creating your perfect human double?

CONSTANCE

Quite close.

ZYGOTE

You must be working around the clock. No time for friends?

CONSTANCE

I'm afraid not. I had hoped that *you* would make friends.

ZYGOTE

I find the general population as repulsive as they find me.

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I too prefer my own company.

ZYGOTE

We're cut from the same cloth, eh?

CONSTANCE

You look thin. Have you been eating?

ZYGOTE

I take my meals at the boarding house. I don't seem to be gaining any weight. I suspect the fat German cook sucks all the nutrients out of the meat before she serves it.

CONSTANCE

You really do an impersonation of me?

ZYGOTE

Oscar worthy.

CONSTANCE

Hold still. (She gives him the injection.)

ZYGOTE

Ahhhh. The chemical. It's instant. I keep forgetting that. Ahhh. You're the crazy genius of all time. You gotta market this thing. It's a killer.

CONSTANCE

I have no intention of being in the business of trafficking illegal substances. And neither should you.

ZYGOTE

What's that supposed to mean?

CONSTANCE

It's no secret that selling morphine is your stock in trade.

ZYGOTE

So what if it is? We all have to earn a living. And we all need our crutch.

CONSTANCE

What am I to do with you?

ZYGOTE

You'd like to see me destroyed. Wouldn't you? Thrown in the garbage with the rest of the medical refuse. Well, I'm not going anywhere, Dr. Hudson. You and I are linked together forever or until I decide to bring you down. And I will bring you down. I'll bring down this entire building. (*He runs out of the lab and crosses into Queenie's Penthouse.*)