



## Such Wicked Intent (Apprenticeship of Victor Frankenstein, Book 2)

By Kenneth Oppel

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**Devotion turns deadly in this second Gothic thriller from Printz Honor–winner Kenneth Oppel that is “every bit as thrilling and engaging” (VOYA) as *This Dark Endeavor*.**

When does obsession become madness? Tragedy has forced sixteen-year-old Victor Frankenstein to swear off alchemy forever. He burns the Dark Library. He vows he will never dabble in the dark sciences again—just as he vows he will no longer covet Elizabeth, his brother’s betrothed.

If only these things were not so tempting.

When he and Elizabeth discover a portal into the spirit world, they cannot resist. Together with Victor’s twin, Konrad, and their friend Henry, the four venture into a place of infinite possibilities where power and passion reign. But as they search for the knowledge to raise the dead, they unknowingly unlock a darkness from which they may never return.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"Vividly descriptive language and further development of complex main characters keep the narrative intense and engaging.... The improbable doesn't seem so impossible thanks to Oppel's impressive storytelling ability."--"The Horn Book"

"Kenneth Oppel creates a darkly Gothic world so unique it's not bound by literary traditions.... Mr. Oppel is an expert storyteller and an outstanding world builder."--"NY Journal of Books"

"Oppel's second book in "The Dark Endeavor Chronicles" is every bit as thrilling and engaging as the first one.... Oppel's character development is exceptional, and it is clear that he has done his research. The book draws readers in from the beginning and continues to create suspense as the characters go in and out of the spirit world, where dark creatures lurk. Fans of both Oppel's first book and Shelley's original work will not be disappointed."--"VOYA"

"Everything readers love about Oppel is here: his fierce intelligence; baroque but concise prose; developed, unsentimental characters; and ability to keep his eye on the prize--in this case, the stubborn, yet somehow still likable, character of Victor and his slow road to becoming Mary Shelley's mad scientist."--"Booklist"

\* "Printz honor-winner Oppel skillfully portrays [Victor] as both a troubled teen and the boy who would become Frankenstein. Addictions and lustful encounters add another layer of sophistication to the gothic melodrama. A standout sequel and engrossing ghost story."--"Kirkus Reviews", starred review

"Fans of Kenneth Oppel and "This Dark Endeavor" will seize upon this tightly written, morbid tale in which the familiar adventurers blossom into more complete, nuanced characters who fight to save themselves from their own worst instincts."

#### About the Author

Kenneth Oppel is the author of numerous books for young readers. His award-winning Silverwing trilogy has sold over a million copies worldwide and been adapted as an animated TV series and stage play. *Airborn* won a Michael L. Printz Honor Book Award and the Canadian Governor General's Literary Award for children's literature; its sequel, *Skybreaker*, was a *New York Times* bestseller and was named Children's Novel of the Year by the *London Times*. He is also the author of *Half Brother*, *This Dark Endeavor*, *Such Wicked Intent*, and *The Boundless*. Born on Canada's Vancouver Island, he has lived in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, Canada; in England and Ireland; and now resides in Toronto with his wife and children. Visit him at [KennethOppel.ca](http://KennethOppel.ca).

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### CHAPTER 1

#### CONSUMED

THE BOOKS FLEW OPEN LIKE STARTLED BIRDS TRYING TO escape the flames. One after the other I savagely hurled them into the hottest part of the bonfire, watching them ignite almost before they landed.

We'd hauled everything out of the Dark Library, every alchemical tome, every *grimoire*, every glass vial and earthenware mortar. Father had ordered that it all be destroyed, and he'd enlisted the help of only our most trusted servants. But even with their assistance it had taken us many hours to carry it all out into the courtyard.

It was well past midnight now. There were no more books left to add to the conflagration, but my body still craved things to tear and throw. I prowled the margins of the fire with a shovel, flinging half-burned debris back into the center of the inferno. I was hungry for destruction. I looked at my father, the servants, their faces pale and terrible in the dancing light and shadow.

Pain throbbed from the stumps of my two missing fingers. The heat seared my face and brought water to my eyes. There was nothing remarkable about this bonfire, no spectral lights, no demonic whiff of brimstone. It was just cracked glass and burning paper and ink and reeking leather. The smoke lifted into the dark autumn sky, carrying with it all the lies and false promises I'd foolishly believed would save my brother.

\* \* \*

The next morning I woke to the sound of the birds' dawn chorus and had my brief blissful moment—always the smallest of moments—before I remembered.

*He is gone, truly gone.*

There was only a hint of light behind my curtains, but I knew sleep had abandoned me, so I sat up, my body stiff from the previous night. The smell of smoke was still trapped in my hair. I put my bare feet against the cool floor and stared blankly down at my toes. The dull pulses of pain in my right hand were the only reminders that time even continued to pass.

In the three weeks since my twin's death, I'd felt neither fully asleep nor awake. Things happened around me without happening *to* me. Konrad had shared my experiences for so long that without him as my confidant, nothing seemed properly real. My sorrow had folded itself over and over like a vast sheet of paper, becoming thicker and thicker, harder and harder, until it filled my entire body. I'd avoided everyone and sought out places where I could be alone.

We were a house of ravens, dressed in our mourning black.

I clenched my eyes shut for a moment, then stood and hurriedly dressed. I wanted to be outside. The house was still asleep as I made my way down the grand staircase and opened the door to the courtyard. The sky was just starting to brighten above the mountains, the air crystalline and still. The bonfire had all but burned out, leaving a low, ragged pile of faintly smoking ash and fractured earthenware.

"Can't sleep either?" said a voice, and in surprise I looked over to see Elizabeth.

I shook my head.

"Every morning I wake so early," she said, "and there's always just a second when—"

"Me too," I said.

She gave a quick nod. In the severe lines of her black dress, she appeared thinner and paler, but no less

beautiful. As a small child she'd come to live with us, an orphaned and very distant relation. Quickly she'd become part of our family, and a cherished friend to my brother and me—but this past summer my thoughts for her had often been more than friendly. I forced myself to look away. Her heart had always belonged to Konrad.

“So it's done,” she said, staring at the smoldering remains of the Dark Library. “I saw you all, last night. Did it make you feel better?”

“Briefly. No, not even that. It was something to do. You didn't feel like burning some books?”

She sighed. “I couldn't. I felt too heartsick, just thinking of all the hope we'd put into them.”

It seemed an age, but was scarcely three months ago, that Konrad, Elizabeth, and I had discovered the secret passage to the Dark Library. It was a hidden storehouse of arcane volumes collected by our ancestor Wilhelm Frankenstein. Father had forbidden us from returning and said the books were filled with dangerous nonsense, but when Konrad became desperately ill and no doctor could heal him, I'd taken it upon myself to find a cure. One of the texts in the library held the recipe for the legendary Elixir of Life. With our dearest friend Henry Clerval, and under the guidance of an alchemist called Julius Polidori, we'd sought out the elixir's three ingredients, each more dangerous to obtain than the previous. I glanced at my right hand, my two missing fingers. But even after all we'd risked, it hadn't helped.

Staring over the pathetic remains of the bonfire, for the first time I felt a pang of regret. So many yearning theories and recipes.

“I can't help thinking,” I murmured, “that perhaps if I'd been faster, or smarter, or found some other, wiser tome...”

“Victor—,” she said gently.

“And then other times I wonder...” I couldn't finish my sentence.

For a moment she was silent. Then she stepped closer and took my hands. Her skin was soft and cool. “You didn't kill him. Look at me. We don't know what killed Konrad. Whether it was the elixir we gave him, or just his disease, or something else entirely. You're not responsible.”

“There's no color or taste to things,” I said, “no hope of things ever being what they were.”

With determination she inhaled. “He's dead, and no amount of wishful thinking will bring him back. It's a struggle, but I've resigned myself to that. And you must too.”

“You think his soul is elsewhere, though,” I said, knowing that she often traveled to the church to light her candles and pray. “I've no such consolation.”

She stepped closer and hugged me. Gratefully, my arms encircled her. I could feel her heart beating against my ribs.

“Nothing will be the same again, you're right,” she said. “We're in the depths of grief. But we're also built for happiness. That I truly believe. We'll find it again. We must help each other find it.”

She lifted her head to look at me. The sun had just cleared the mountain peaks, and in its pure light I saw the three whisker-thin scratches that Polidori's diabolical lynx had left across her cheek. The urge to kiss her dizzied me—and for the briefest moment I wondered if she might *want* to be kissed.

I looked at the ground. My voice was hoarse when I asked, “And how will you find it, do you think, this happiness?”

“When things are more settled here,” she said, “maybe when spring comes, I plan to join a convent.”

In utter disbelief my eyes snapped back to hers. “A convent?”

“Yes.”

It had been so long since I'd laughed that the sound that burst out of me probably sounded like the cawing of a deranged crow. But I was quite unable to stop.

Elizabeth released me as I staggered back, and crossed her arms, eyebrows compressed.

“And why is this so amusing?” she demanded.

I struggled for speech, swiping tears from my eyes. “Convent... *you?*” And then I could only shake my head.

“Keep your voice down,” she growled. “I haven't told anyone else my plans yet.”

“I can't... imagine... why,” I gasped.

“I'll have you know, I've given it a great deal of thought,” she said stormily. “And I'm determined to accept all that's happened, and place my life in God's hands.”

“I'm sorry... I'm sorry,” I said, finally regaining some control of myself. I let out a big breath. It had felt good to laugh. I looked Elizabeth in the eye. “It's just that... I can't quite see you as a nun.”

“You doubt my passion for my faith?”

“No, no. You're *very* passionate. That, I think, might be the problem.”

She began to say something, then cut herself short and narrowed her eyes at me. “You're such an ass, Victor,” she said. And with that, she stalked off.

I watched her disappear inside the house and, with a sigh, took one last look at the sooty remains of the Dark Library. Amidst the gray debris something bright red suddenly flashed in the sun. I squinted. It was just a bit of glass, surely. But when I stepped closer, I saw that it was the spine of a red book—completely unburned.

With great determination I forced myself to turn back to the house. But halfway there my step faltered.

No paper could have withstood the searing heat of those flames. How could a book not burn?

I swallowed against the heavy thump of my heart. Some birds trilled as they flew overhead. The courtyard was still empty, but it wouldn't be long before the servants came to start removing the debris.

I seized a shovel, stepped into the ash, and carefully slipped the blade under the red object. I lifted it out and deposited it on the cobblestone. Kneeling, I saw its cover, wonderfully decorated with scrollwork but bearing no title or name. A book that would not burn.

*Walk away.*

But I couldn't restrain myself. I reached out, and the moment I touched the cover, pain seared my fingertips. I recoiled with a gasp. What kind of devilish thing was this? Then, feeling ridiculous, I realized that this book was made of metal and was still hot from the blaze.

Sucking my fingertips, I bent my head lower. The illusion was exceedingly clever. Lines had been carefully scored into the metal sides to look like actual page ends. And, squinting, I could now see that there was a single straight seam that ran all the way around the book, with two tiny hinges embedded ingeniously within the spine. It was in fact a slim metal container, meant to look, and open, exactly like a book.

Just another strange book fro...

## **Users Review**

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#### **David Musick:**

This Such Wicked Intent (Apprenticeship of Victor Frankenstein, Book 2) is brand new way for you who has intense curiosity to look for some information since it relief your hunger details. Getting deeper you in it getting knowledge more you know otherwise you who still having tiny amount of digest in reading this Such Wicked Intent (Apprenticeship of Victor Frankenstein, Book 2) can be the light food in your case because the information inside this particular book is easy to get simply by anyone. These books build itself in the form which is reachable by anyone, yeah I mean in the e-book web form. People who think that in book form make them feel drowsy even dizzy this e-book is the answer. So there is no in reading a publication especially this one. You can find what you are looking for. It should be here for you actually. So , don't miss that! Just read this e-book style for your better life along with knowledge.

#### **Amanda Bell:**

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until youngsters. For example Naruto or Detective Conan you can read and think you are the character on there. Therefore not at all of book are usually make you bored, any it offers up you feel happy, fun and loosen up. Try to choose the best book for you personally and try to like reading which.

**Michael Kelly:**

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