



Captain Walton: An Arctic explorer:

The Arctic seafarer whose letters open and close *Frankenstein*. Walton picks the bedraggled Victor Frankenstein up off the ice, helps nurse him back to health, and hears Victor's story. He records the incredible tale in a series of letters addressed to his sister, Margaret Saville, in England.



Victor Frankenstein: A scientist. In his early twenties.

The doomed protagonist and narrator of the main portion of the story. Studying in Ingolstadt, Victor discovers the secret of life and creates an intelligent but grotesque monster, from whom he recoils in horror. Victor keeps his creation of the monster a secret, feeling increasingly guilty and ashamed as he realizes how helpless he is to prevent the monster from ruining his life and the lives of others.



The Monster: Frankenstein's creation.

The eight-foot-tall, hideously ugly creation of Victor Frankenstein. Intelligent and sensitive, the monster attempts to integrate himself into human social patterns, but all who see him shun him. His feeling of abandonment compels him to seek revenge against his creator.



Clerval, Frankenstein's friend. A philosopher.

Victor's boyhood friend, who nurses Victor back to health in Ingolstadt. After working unhappily for his father, Henry begins to follow in Victor's footsteps as a scientist. His cheerfulness counters Victor's moroseness.



Elizabeth Frankenstein's 'cousin'.

An orphan, four to five years younger than Victor, whom the Frankensteins adopt. In the 1818 edition of the novel, Elizabeth is Victor's cousin, the child of Alphonse Frankenstein's sister. In the 1831 edition, Victor's mother rescues Elizabeth from a destitute peasant cottage in Italy. Elizabeth embodies the novel's motif of passive women, as she waits patiently for Victor's attention.



Felix and Agathe: The cottagers that the monster spies on. They are political refugees.

Part of a family of peasants who beat the monster away when he tries to befriend them. The monster learnt to speak and interact by observing them.

Big Ideas and themes

A theme is a central idea that runs through a story. Can you find each of themes below in the play?



Science and Power



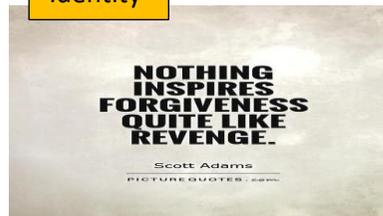
Conflict

Everyone sees what you appear to be...



...few really know what you are. (Machiavelli)

Identity



Relationships



EXISTENCE

Context

Enlightenment (16th - 18th Centuries)	The era just before Frankenstein was written. A period of history which involved the development of new ideas and scientific discovery. During this time people began questioning God. It also led to the Industrial Revolution.
Romanticism (18th 19th centuries)	The text is a Romantic text - it features discussions over the beauty of nature. The Romantics believed in the power of God and the beauty of nature.
Prometheus	The novel's subtitle is 'The Modern Prometheus'. Prometheus is a figure in Greek culture/religion, who made humans out of clay. He also stole fire from the Gods, and to punish him, they chained him to a rock and called an eagle to peck out his liver each day.
Galvanism	Scientist Luigi Galvani applied electrodes to dead body parts and caused them to be 'reanimated' - the muscles moved as if the creatures were alive. This was exciting and terrifying for Victorians.
Jean-Jacques	Philosopher from Switzerland - known to Percy Shelley. His theory (which was radical at the time!) was that people begin life as innocents and may become corrupted/evil over time due to culture and society.

Who said it and why?

- 1) '...a creature like a man, but huge and hideous beyond belief.' Pg.10
- 2) 'Yes, if we're lucky tonight and it storms...well, my dear fellow, we're in the threshold of a new age.' Pg.14
- 3) 'And I thought: the power that can do that is the power of life and death. I'll harness it. I'll study it and master it and make it work for mankind.' Pg.16
- 4) 'There's no cause for shock or disgust in nature.' Pg.17
- 5) 'You've no idea how lonely it's been...I've been working at this for six years now.' Pg.19
- 6) 'I'm worried. I have such dreams...I see Victor in them, and there's something horrible pursuing him - or is he pursuing it?' Pg.22
- 7) 'Clerval, I beg you - leave me alone - you don't know how dangerous this could be.' Pg.25
- 8) 'This is pure evil, Frankenstein.' Pg.26
- 9) 'But you're not what I thought you'd be...I thought I was making an angel...I thought I was making something better than human!' Pg. 26
- 10) 'I will not hurt anyone. I am their friend. Friend of everyone.' Pg.34
- 11) 'Men see me, they hurt me...But I am good. I want to love them, not hurt, not kill.' Pg.35
- 12) 'Evil? Evil - you want evil? - then I shall be evil! I shall be terror and hatred and revenge - revenge!' Pg.36
- 13) 'We should have helped him, Felix. He was an outcast just like us.' Pg.37
- 14) 'I am exactly what you made me, Frankenstein.' Pg.39
- 15) 'Monster! I didn't create you to do evil - why have you betrayed me?' Pg.41
- 16) '...you turned away in horror and left me to find my own way through the world...' Pg.41
- 17) 'All alone in the icy mountains, weeping, crying with rage and loneliness.' Pg.42
- 18) 'Your God has nothing to do with me. You are my God. You made me, and you owe me happiness.' Pg.42