

PUBLICATION TITLE:

Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus

SPECIMEN NO:

FL-01.0002

AUTHOR:

Mary Shelley

Born: Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin

PUBLICATION YEAR:

1818

TEXT USED:

The 1818 first edition. Mary Shelley revised the novel substantially for 1831, and the two differ in ways that change the story's meaning. See Section 2.

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TAXONOMY CODES:

PRIMARY:**100A** Biological Sciences**500A** Social Sciences**FOCUSED:****104A** Medicine**105A** Neuroscience

PLOT SUMMARY:

An English explorer named Robert Walton, pushing north through the Arctic ice in search of a passage, pulls a dying man from a floe and writes down his story. The man is Victor Frankenstein, a Genevan student who went to university at Ingolstadt, learned everything the natural philosophers of his day could teach him, and then spent two years assembling a human body from the dissecting room and the charnel house. On a November night he brings it to life, looks at what he has made, and runs. The creature is left to raise itself. Hidden beside a poor family's cottage, it teaches itself to speak and read, understands what it is, and comes back to ask its maker for one thing: a companion made like itself. Victor agrees, then destroys her half-finished, and the creature answers by taking everyone Victor loves, one at a time. The chase runs north into the ice, where the story began. The last word belongs to the creature, standing over the body of the man who would not look at him.