

# QUICK CARD: FRANKENSTEIN



<i>Reference</i>	<i>Frankenstein–The Modern Prometheus</i> . Mary Shelley (1818) ISBN-13: 978-0393927931
<i>Plot</i>	When young Victor Frankenstein’s mother dies, he vows to master the secrets of Nature and overcome death through scientific inquiry. When his dark experiments produce monstrous results, Victor attempts to flee the consequence of his hubris.
<i>Setting</i>	The story ranges from the hamlets of Europe to the unpopulated wilderness of the arctic polar cap during the 18 <sup>th</sup> c. Enlightenment Period. The tragedy takes place from November to August of the same year; Victor had worked two years to create the creature, but loses everything in only six months. The story utilizes much nature imagery in keeping with the Romantic ideals of the sublimity of nature (nature’s personality and even sympathy with man).
<i>Characters</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victor Frankenstein – intelligent and determined 17 or 18 year–old university student of the natural sciences whose curiosity and sorrow provoke arrogant experimentation</li> <li>• Elizabeth – Victor’s adopted, angelic cousin with whom he was raised and to whom he was essentially betrothed</li> <li>• Clerval – Victor’s young and naive lifelong friend</li> <li>• Justine – maid of Victor’s family accused of the murder of Victor’s brother, William</li> <li>• William – Victor’s youngest brother, strangled by the creature</li> <li>• Father – Victor’s widowed father</li> <li>• The Creature – animated matter that Victor Frankenstein pieced together from the remains of dead bodies. Ugly beyond all horror, he is rejected. Bewildered and lonely, he becomes wrathful, vengeful, and violent when he is exiled.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• R. Walton – the narrator of the story frame and captain of an exploratory expedition to the Polar regions. He tells Victor’s story.</li> </ul>
<i>Conflict</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Man vs. Nature, Man vs. God: Will Victor “pioneer a new way, explore unknown powers, and unfold to the world the deepest mysteries of creation”?</li> <li>• Man vs. God: Will Victor “become greater than his nature will allow”?</li> <li>• Man vs. Man, Man vs. God: Will Victor avoid the consequences of his ill-advised discoveries?</li> </ul>
<i>Theme</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fatal Flaw of Hubris (ambition and its consequences)</li> <li>• The Nature of Man</li> <li>• Scientific Ethics</li> <li>• The Power of Man</li> </ul>
<i>Literary Devices</i>	<p>Mythopoeic literature – employs myth to discuss human life, events and ideas. Here, Shelley updates the Prometheus myth to discuss the pursuit of knowledge through scientific inquiry in the created universe. She probes the issue of ethics even as she contemplates the nature of man.</p>