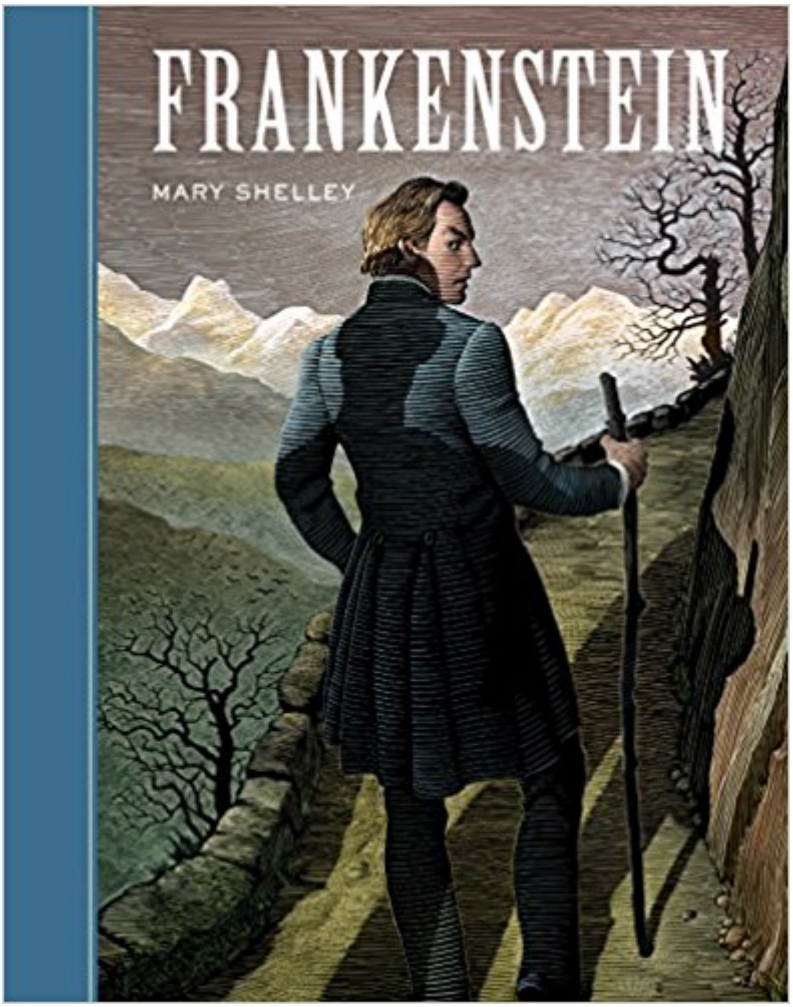
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Frankenstein (Sterling Unabridged Classics)



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Synopsis

Mary ShelleyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s groundbreaking classicÃ¢â ¬â •begun as a ghost story for friendsÃ¢â ¬â •is a potent blend of science fiction and horror that has inspired countless movie and other adaptations. Nothing, however, equals the depth and beauty of ShelleyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s original, which emains as relevant as ever. In his arrogance, Dr. Victor Frankenstein dreams of discovering the very secret of lifeÃ¢â ¬Â|and he succeeds, bringing a new creature into existence. But should man ever play GodÃ¢â ¬â •and if he does, what does he owe his creation?

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Customer Reviews

Frankenstein, loved by many decades of readers and praised by such eminent literary critics as Harold Bloom, seems hardly to need a recommendation. If you haven’t read it recently, though, you may not remember the sweeping force of the prose, the grotesque, surreal imagery, and the multilayered doppelgÃƒÂ¤nger themes of Mary Shelley’s masterpiece. As fantasy writer Jane Yolen writes of this (the reviewer’s favorite) edition, "The strong black and whites of the main text [illustrations] are dark and brooding, with unremitting shadows and stark contrasts. But the central conversation with the monster--who owes nothing to the overused movie image … but is rather the novel’s charnel-house composite--is where [Barry] Moser’s illustrations show their greatest power ... The viewer can all but smell the powerful stench of the monster’s breath as its words spill out across the page. Strong book-making for one of the world’s strongest and most remarkable books." Includes an illuminating afterword by Joyce Carol Oates. --This text refers to the Paperback

edition.

Grade 3-7-Large print, short chapters, and an abundance of white space provide an attractive, more-accessible option for readers who are not ready to handle the originals. At best, this approach works as a vehicle to deliver the basic elements of the stories while providing an entertaining, simplified version of the classic at a lower reading level. After all, many of our cultural references would be lost on readers who don’t know what Jekyll and Hyde represent, or what consequences the creator of Frankenstein faced. At worst, the sometimes-stilted language reads like awkward translations. What is missing, of course, is the very language that makes these classics so evocative of their time. Victorian London, for example, is captured so much more readily with the elegant and dramatic prose of Robert Louis Stevenson. If presenting Classic Starts, do so with a recommendation: when you are ready, read the originals. There can be no substitute.-Elizabeth Fernandez, Brunswick Middle School, Greenwich, CT Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

If you’re reading this review, you only have one question. You’re not looking for a book review, you already know it’s a classic. You already know this is the most original, and one of the best, and best-written horror stories in literature. You may or may not like the story, but that’s a matter of personal taste. A lot of people don’t like Shakespeare, but no one questions whether he was a good writer or not. If you don’t like the writing style, it’s because you aren’t familiar with the English of this period. Nearly eighty years before Stoker’s "Dracula" (an idea stolen from Polidori’s "The Vampyre", which was an idea stolen from LeFanu’s "Carmilla"), this most-original horror masterpiece was born. So, your only question is, "Is this really the uncensored 1818 version? Because I’ve only seen one other verified version, and it’s over twenty dollars in paperback. All the others claiming to be the 1818 version have been disproved." YES, as far as I can tell, it is. The only preface is Shelley’s own original. There is no introduction, no commentary or editorial credits whatsoever. There are no illustrations, and the spelling and language have not been edited. Have a good thesaurus handy. So, here it is, the author’s original script, no frills, for a bargain price. Which is exactly what I was looking for.

Where do I begin? Shelley’s masterpiece is easily the greatest work of literature in the English canon. Rather than give a broad summary, I will simply say that this novel will change the way you think about life and science. Frankenstein’s hubris shadows his work and the creature will make you

think twice about the meaning of creation and our roles in the world.If you are an English major, you will read it eventually. If not, read it anyway!Also, this Norton edition is fantastic. Between having the first edition in print and additional resources and scholarly essays, this book is well worth the purchase.

We all know the basic story - a doctor unleashes a monster on the world after creating it from scratch parts and some electrical magic.This original novel takes us right into the head of that "mad" doctor.What led up to the creation? Why was he so obsessed with the creation? What made him turn on his progeny?And, we also are let right into the mind of the creature, who, abandoned, makes his own way in the world, rejected, scorned, feared. How does he survive? How does he learn? Who does he love? And what does he do to try and influence the good doctor to make this right?It’s all here.Mary Shelley was only 18 when she wrote her novel. Her vocabulary and prose are amazing for someone so young.The story begins in an unusual way - a man writing to an unknown loved one describes his journey leading up to a sighting of the "monster".We’re then transported into the life of the young Dr. Frankenstein, writing his long journal entry about his fateful decision to create life from "nothing". He foreshadows terrible things, of which most of them come true.We meet Dr. Frankenstein’s family - those he loved and grew up with. His father, brothers, and beloved adopted cousin, Elizabeth, whom he later vows to marry.They all play their parts in this macabre story. All throughout, we think, "Stop it, Dr. Frankenstein. You must be able to find a way to stop this madness." But, events rush headlong just to where the doctor predicts they will.

Readers will be surprised to read this nineteenth century "horror story," because the English woman Mary W. Shelley (1797-1851) did not write this book as it is shown in the many motion pictures that were made of it. She published this gothic tale, which many scholars see as the earliest version of a science fiction novel when she was only 21. Scholars think that she wrote it as an attack against the emerging industrial revolution, but perhaps, as we will see, it is more than that. The story is written in the delightful style of its time, like the mystery tale of the Englishman Wilke Collins, which was serialized in 1859-1860 and published in 1860, The Woman in White, which some scholars say is the first detective story, while others give the honor to Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849).Mary Shelley became the wife of the famous poet Percy Shelley after writing her novel. She subtitled it The Modern Prometheus. According to some but not all Greek myths, Prometheus was a giant who created people and latter brought them fire. It appears that the Prometheus in the tale is the creator Frankenstein, who was not a giant in height, but in intellect. Most people consider Prometheus a

hero, but not Shelley. She thought of fire as being bad because it caused people to kill and eat animals and gave people more implements with which to wage war and murder people. Frankenstein tells the story to a man who saved him while he is pursuing the man he created. He warns the man not to pursue scientific goals that will harm humanity. The Shelley story is about an educated man of science who was born in Switzerland and educated in a German university, who is interested in helping people. Everyone who meets him likes him. He comes from an educated amicable family who love him, and he loves them. He searches for an answer to what is life. He wonders if he can create life, and succeeds in doing so. He creates an eight-foot man, who is never named in the novel. He is repulsed by the man he creates and thinks of him as a monster as soon as the man is alive. All people who later see his creation are also repulsed and this causes the man to hide and live alone and it accounts for the profound loneliness that the man feels. His creator becomes depressed at what he has done, rushes away from his lab, and is sick in bed for four months. He is Frankenstein. The unnamed man he created leaves. Frankenstein returns home from Germany and discovers that someone killed his younger brother. He is convinced that the man he created did it, and pursues him to kill him. He meets his creation and is unable to harm him because the man is larger and stronger than he. His creation tells Frankenstein that he killed his brother by mistake. The boy saw him, was disgusted at seeing him, and started shouting. All he did was place his hand over the boy's mouth. He tells how he has been traveling about for more than a year, found that every human despises him, and has become very lonely. He begs Frankenstein to make him a female companion because he, like the biblical Adam, can't live alone. Frankenstein agrees. However, when he finishes making the female he becomes frightened that two monsters, as he thinks of them, could harm mankind. So he destroys the female. The man he created is enraged and vows vengeance against Frankenstein for destroying his life. What happens to Frankenstein and the man he created, I will leave for readers to read and enjoy. Will the creation carry out his threat? If yes, how? Which of the two will outlive the other? What will the survivor do? Is it right to call Frankenstein's creation a monster because of the way he looks? Readers may also want to ask themselves: is Mary Shelly's pessimistic approach to scientific advances justified? Perhaps there is another interpretation of the story. It may be an examination with comments upon the creation of man. The first biblical creation Adam is unnamed, like Frankenstein's creation. Although most people think his name is Adam, the Hebrew word adam actually means "human." There is an ancient Jewish legend that when God decided to create this adam, the angels objected that people were not sufficiently good. This parallels the rejection of Frankenstein's creation by society. Like Frankenstein's creation, the adam was also lonely and wants a companion. Today, many people,

like Frankenstein’s creation feel alienated and lonely, and live a life without meaning. This is something to think about.

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