

Book Review: Frankenstein

Author: Mary Shelley

Frankenstein is an old classic about a scientist who creates a monster and the awful events he unintentionally causes. Victor Frankenstein is a hard-working young man at university who discovers how to give life to an inanimate body and uses his knowledge to create a man-monster. He believes his discovery will lead to further scientific advances but when he succeeds in bringing his creation to life he is filled with loathing.

I enjoyed this book, which ultimately questions what it is to be human. Every book that has been written about artificial intelligence since Frankenstein owes something to Mary Shelley.

I found the relationship between monster and creator compelling and fascinating and I liked the fact that although Frankenstein sees his monster as a brutal demon, the book allows readers to see events from the monster's perspective. I liked the chapters in the story that were narrated by the monster because I sympathised with his loneliness, while I thought Victor Frankenstein was arrogant and self-righteous. Ultimately it is Frankenstein who must answer for the monstrous act committed by his creation.

Generally this book is regarded as a horror story but I would have to disagree. More than anything else this is a sad book, when you think about what would have happened if the monster had not been so alone, and if every human had not spurned him in the way they did. I have been thinking about this ever since I turned the final page. The writing is complex and vivid and expresses the anguish of both monster and creator. Those who do not enjoy complicated and slightly old-fashioned writing will find it difficult to read, but I thought the story was exceptionally well told and the writing definitely brought it to life. It's hard to believe it came from the imagination of a 19 year old girl writing in 1818.

Overall, I would highly recommend it and I can see why it has been enjoyed by so many generations.

Reviewed by: Mr. Newell