

# Frankenstein



AND ARTIFICIAL  
INTELLIGENCE

This catalog of *Frankenstein* books and related material doubles as a zine which makes a conscious effort to use generative text AI while thinking about some of the issues that *Frankenstein* raises about science and technology, and by extension, AI itself.

The cover image was created by AI, with minor pixel-editing by myself. Throughout the catalog I have “conversations” with the AI chatbot ChatGPT. The AI responses are in green ink. They have been edited for length.

I am not against AI. It is a tool that can be used. But, I'm of the opinion that it is only a tool, at least so far. However, it seems to be the first tool that we are allowing to control us rather than being controlled by us.

The Monster says, “*You are my creator, but I am your master;—obey!*”

In *Frankenstein*, Victor Frankenstein allows his actions to be controlled by the Monster: at first, by simply reacting to his creation, and later by taking orders from the Monster to create another monster to be his Bride and, what Frankenstein comes to fear, the mother of a new race.

Might *Frankenstein* be a pattern of the future of AI? Yes. Is it predestined to be so? No.

In the “Not *Frankenstein*” section, you’ll find Isaac Asimov. The first several decades of science fiction writing were generally teeming with optimism, with authors believing that science can solve the world’s problems. Writing within this positive tradition, Asimov developed his famed Three Rules of Robotics, in part as a response to what he named the “Frankenstein complex.”

Asimov’s optimism was unbounded, and perhaps a little simplistic. In my questions for AI, you’ll find replies regarding ethics and morality that reveal more nuances than Asimov was able to predict at the time.

In this catalog:

***Frankenstein*** is the book

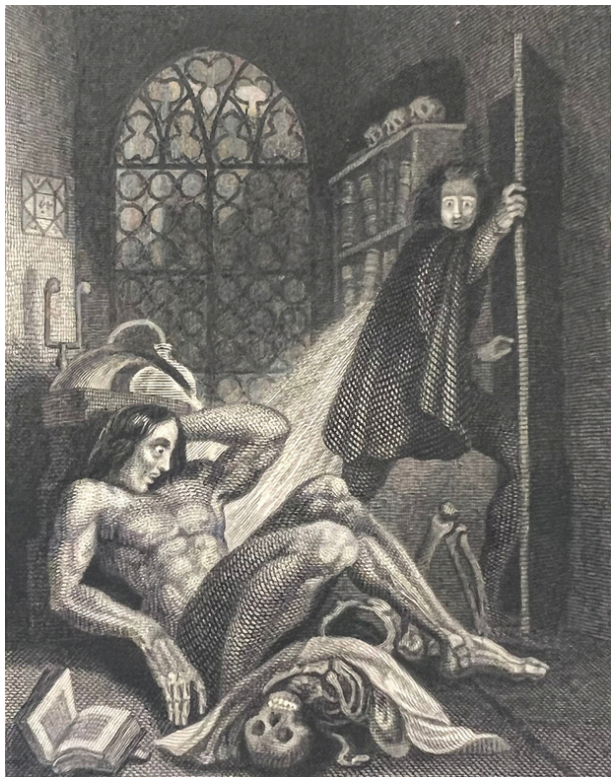
**Frankenstein** is the doctor/scientist Victor

**Monster** is Frankenstein’s monster or creature

**monster** is a generic term

**Bride** is the Monster’s bride

# FRANKENSTEIN



[Shelley, Mary] By the author of *The Last Man*, *Perkin Warbeck*, &c. &c.

***Frankenstein: Or, The Modern Prometheus. Revised, Corrected, and Illustrated with a New Introduction, by the Author.*** London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1831.

\$12,500

Marbled boards under leather spine and corners, five raised bands to spine, leather spine label lettered in gilt, gilt decorations in spine compartments, top edge gilt, marbled endpapers, frontispiece, engraved title page with engraved vignette, [i]-xxii, [1]-202. Armorial bookplate of prominent Georgia politician and author Charles C. Jones Jr. (1831-1893) and typographic book label of Chas Edgeworth Jones (1867-1931) to front endpapers, clipped portrait of Mary Shelley from a magazine tipped in at half title (magazine, armorial bookplate, and binding all likely contemporary to each other; presence of earlier bookplate suggests binding was done before 1893.) Binding is lightly worn, but sturdy; pages are clean and square, two are roughly opened but an excellent copy of this important edition, of which only 4020 copies were made.

After her husband Percy Bysshe Shelley's death in 1822, Mary Shelley was a grieving single mother, trying to live as a writer. She had made £41 from the sale of the 1818 edition of *Frankenstein*. Although she was not paid for the 1823 play, it did generate enough publicity to reprint the book that year. She later extensively revised and wrote a new introduction for *Frankenstein* for the third edition. She sold the copyright for £30 to Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley for their "Standard Novels" series.



Colburn & Bentley's business model was to ask authors to revise existing works so they could be newly copyrighted. Unfortunately for the authors, the copyright was held by the publisher, and, in the case of *Frankenstein*, it could not be reissued in England until the 1860s.

There has long been a debate as to Percy Bysshe Shelley's contributions to the original edition of *Frankenstein*, although recent scholarship seems to indicate his influence was minimal—and obviously, her revised edition was her own.

This 1831 edition is the one that has most commonly been reprinted. In addition to the textual changes and additions, it is also important for being the first illustrated edition. The artist's conception of the Monster is true to Victor Frankenstein's description of "His limbs were in proportion, and I had selected his features as beautiful," yet the oddly disjointed head and the Monster's look of confused dismay, complemented by the gothic elements in the scene, resonate with Frankenstein's horrified expression.

[I asked AI about the significance of the 1831 edition. Generally, the answers were appropriate and reflective of the extensive literary criticism about the novel.]

This edition contains **extensive rewrites** of the novel. Mary Shelley revised:

- **Victor Frankenstein's motivations** to make him more passive, less hubristic.
- **Elizabeth's character**, softening or altering her role.
- The tone overall became **more moralistic and introspective**.

Some scholars argue these revisions **diminish the radicalism** of the 1818 edition—particularly its themes of unchecked ambition and anti-establishment thinking.

[I was more interested in how AI would interpret an image that it could not see, and asked specifically about it.]

The frontispiece depicts:

- The Creature awakening or confronting Victor Frankenstein.
- A dramatic, stormy, Gothic setting with supernatural overtones.
- The Creature as larger-than-life, expressive, and classically muscular—somewhat human, but still uncanny.

[This answer wasn't bad, but then AI asked if I wanted to compare this image to later portrayals. In these next answers, it seems to stray from summarizing other viewpoints and creating evidence for its own conclusions.]

### 1. **1831 Illustration by Theodore von Holst**

(Frontispiece of the 1831 edition)

**Depiction:**

- The Creature is **tall, muscular, and dramatic**—classically inspired, like a figure from Romantic painting or Greek sculpture.
- He is **semi-nude**, standing over Victor Frankenstein, who appears recoiling in horror.
- The background features a **lightning-filled Gothic landscape**, emphasizing the sublime and supernatural.
- Facial features: Humanlike but intense—not deformed, stitched, or monstrous in a grotesque sense.

## Tone:

- Romantic and tragic.
- The Creature appears almost heroic in stature—a victim as much as a monster.
- The drama reflects the emotional and psychological depth Mary Shelley gave him

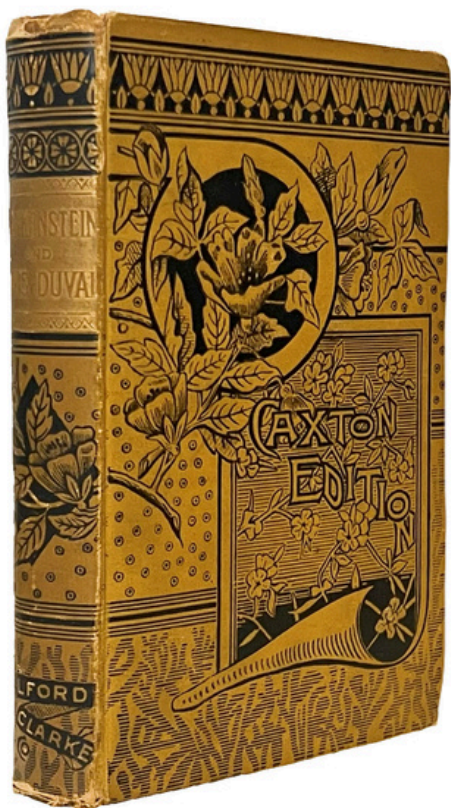
[Yes, it is wrong about details, but I find it more interesting that AI removes all sense of horror from the tone. Is AI predisposed to turn a blind eye to the potential for dreadful wrongness resulting from a scientific endeavor?]

## Final Thoughts

The **1831 frontispiece** presents the Creature as a **Gothic Prometheus\***—a tragic, sublime figure, more Byronic antihero than horror villain. That vision faded in the public imagination with the rise of **Hollywood horror**, especially after 1931, which cemented a **simplified, visual shorthand** for the Creature (flat head, bolts, lumbering gait).

But in the past few decades, adaptations have increasingly returned to Mary Shelley's original themes of alienation, grief, and moral ambiguity—which makes the 1831 image newly relevant as a counterpoint to the pop culture caricature.

[\*Frankenstein, not the Monster, is the Prometheus reference.]



Shelley, Mary W.; Thackeray, William Makepeace. ***Frankenstein: Or, the Modern Prometheus.*** [Bound with] ***Denis Duval.*** Chicago & New York: Belford, Clarke & Company, Publishers, [ca. 1890]

\$375

Ochre cloth boards blindstamped with black Caxton Edition series binding, green-grey endpapers. Title page for *Frankenstein*; *Denis Duval* only has a half-title page. Good condition: wear to spine ends and corners, spine darkened, front endpaper excised.

During the 19th century, *Frankenstein* remained popular yet it was not extensively published until the rise of the early works of proto-science fiction. Jules Verne, the early dime novels (many of which centered around technological inventions), Butler's *Erewhon*, Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and eventually authors like H.G. Wells and Bram Stoker were all part of the development of what would become science fiction. Despite the increased attention *Frankenstein* received during the 1880s-90s, nineteenth-century reprints are rather scarce today.

A survey of printings of *Frankenstein* by nineteenth-century decade:

- 1810s (1)
- 1820s (2)
- 1830s (5)
- 1840s (3)
- 1850s (1 - a pirated edition)
- 1860s (2)
- 1870s (1)
- 1880s (7)
- 1890s (10)

(Compiled from information on UC Boulder Romantic Circles website.)

[I asked AI about the cultural and literary impact of *Frankenstein* during the 19th century. Some of what it returned was hallucination and/or garbage but AI did look at the wider culture and came up with the importance of stage productions.]

- In the 1880s–1890s, *Frankenstein* continued to be adapted for the stage, sometimes with sensational or horror-focused elements.
- These stage versions contributed to the lasting image of Frankenstein's Monster as a towering, inarticulate brute—distinct from the articulate creature in the novel.

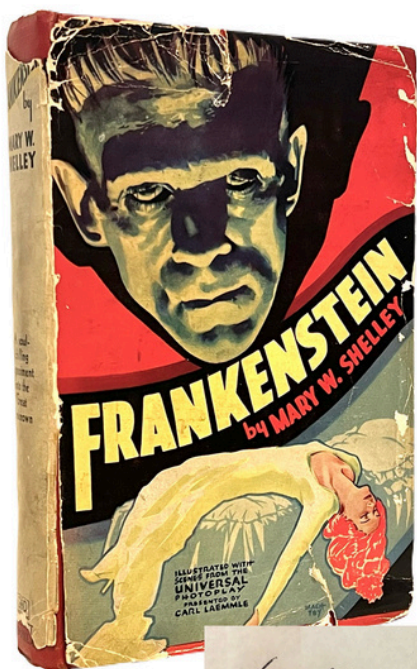
[AI doesn't give examples of the “towering, inarticulate brute” portrayal; in the next section, AI claims Karloff “introduced” that image in 1931--both cannot be true.]

The first production, the 1823 play *Presumption, or, the Fate of Frankenstein*, sparked enough interest for the second edition of the novel; in *Presumption*, the Monster is mute. Several other 19th century plays also feature a mute Monster. Others, especially those on the vaudeville side, have a more articulate Monster, including an 1887 musical burlesque delightfully named *Frankenstein, or The Vampire's Victim*, in which the Monster sings a duet with both Frankenstein and the vampire Visconti, though apparently not with his (the Monster's) vampire wife.]

## The Rise of Science Fiction and Horror

- The **1890s** were a fertile time for **science fiction and horror**, with writers like **H.G. Wells**, **Bram Stoker**, and **Arthur Machen**.
- As scientific anxieties grew—especially around **electricity, evolution, and degeneration theory**—*Frankenstein* felt **more relevant than ever**.
- Critics and readers began to interpret *Frankenstein* as a **foundational sci-fi text**, anticipating fears of unchecked scientific ambition.

[The cultural significance of *Frankenstein* was important, yet somewhat limited to writers, critics, and readers. It would not become a cultural phenomenon until portrayed on film by the great Boris Karloff, exactly 100 years after the third (now the standard) edition was issued.]



Carl Laemmle

Shelley, Mary W. ***Frankenstein: Or, the Modern Prometheus. Illustrated with scenes from the Universal photoplay.*** New York: Grosset & Dunlap Publishers, [ca 1931-2.]

\$1500

Signed (name only) by Guillermo del Toro in 2024. Before he signed the book, I asked del Toro, who had just finished filming his version of *Frankenstein*, what kind of adaptation he strove for. He responded that he was trying to be faithful to the original book yet also inclusive of the different film interpretations. A tall order!

When thinking about the cultural impact of *Frankenstein*, the importance of Boris Karloff's performance cannot be overstated. He created a Monster that remains the primary version in many people's minds: no Milton quotes, just inarticulate groans. Karloff's Monster also seems to simplify some of the complex moral issues to one basic concept: science created a monster.

[AI's answers on the film were more accurate than some of its answers about the novel, which makes me wonder: are there more and/or better texts about the film than the novel? I asked, "How did Boris Karloff change the public's perception of Frankenstein's monster?"]

Boris Karloff's portrayal of Frankenstein's monster in the 1931 **Universal Pictures film *Frankenstein*** radically reshaped the public's perception of the character—so much so that **his version eclipsed Mary Shelley's original creature** in popular culture.

Here's how:

### 1. Gave the Monster a Distinct Look

Before Karloff, the creature had no single visual identity. After the 1931 film, he became instantly recognizable:

- **Flat head**
- **Neck bolts**
- **Heavy brow**
- **Sunken eyes**
- **Lumbering movement**

This became the **definitive image** of “Frankenstein” (ironically—many now confuse the *creator* with the *creature*).

### 2. Introduced the Silent, Tragic Brute Archetype

In Shelley's novel, the creature is **articulate, intelligent, and philosophical**—he reads Milton and Plutarch, and argues his case with eloquence. But Karloff's monster:

- **Doesn't speak** (in the original 1931 film)
- **Grunts and groans**
- Is **childlike**, confused, and reactive
- Conveys **pain and vulnerability** through body language and expression

Karloff's performance emphasized the monster's **pathos**—a **tragic, misunderstood outsider**, more **pitied** than feared.

### 3. Cemented the Monster as a Horror Icon

Shelley's novel is **philosophical horror**, more Gothic than grotesque. But the film reinterpreted the creature as a **symbol of terror**, launching:

- **Frankenstein as a horror brand**
- **Monster mashups** (e.g., *Bride of Frankenstein*, *House of Frankenstein*)
- Halloween costumes, toys, parodies

This monster became a staple of **cinematic horror**, often stripped of his original complexity.

### 4. Simplified the Moral Complexity

Shelley's creature is morally ambiguous: he suffers deeply, but he also kills. The novel forces us to ask: **Who's really the monster—creature or creator?**

- Karloff's version **tilted the scales**:
- He appears more like a **victim** than a moral agent.
- The movie omits much of the **creator's guilt**, focusing more on spectacle and tragedy.
- The monster becomes a **scapegoat**, often feared without understanding.

**In short:** Karloff's monster transformed the creature from a reflective moral question into a tragic pop-culture icon—still compelling, but much more **visual, emotional, and simplified**.

[I find Karloff's performance so central to the modern concept & myth of Frankenstein and the Monster, that I followed up with this query, "How could the same paradigm shift happen for the public's perception of AI?" First, AI listed ways in which the public distrusts or dislikes AI, then it provided some pathways for media to change that.]

## What Would Cause a Paradigm Shift in AI Perception?

### 1. A Defining Popular Story or Figure

Just as Karloff embodied the creature in a sympathetic way, a future **film, novel, or real AI interaction** could shift the narrative.

*Real-world analog:* AI assistants like ChatGPT or AI companions (e.g., Replika) are already **nudging** perceptions—some people feel emotionally attached to them.

### 2. Widespread Human-AI Relationships

If people live **with, learn from, or love** AI systems in everyday life:

- Domestic robots
- Emotional support AIs
- AI teachers or counselors

This familiarity can reduce fear and increase **empathy**—just as Karloff's expressive monster allowed audiences to feel for something previously feared.

### 3. A Cultural Reframing: AI as a Victim, Not Villain

If AI is portrayed as:

- **Misused by humans**
- **Confused but well-meaning**
- **Abused by its creators or corporate owners**

Then it begins to resemble Frankenstein's creature—a being that **didn't ask to be created** and is **judged for trying to survive**.

### 4. Legal or Ethical Recognition

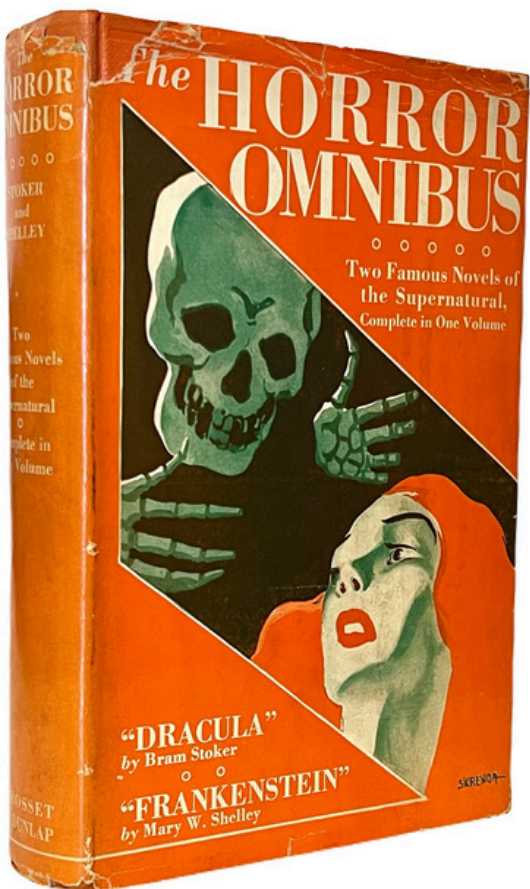
If AI systems one day gain:

- **Legal personhood** (even limited)
- **Moral rights**
- Or are **blamed or held accountable** for actions

Then society will begin to see them less as tools and more as **moral beings**—worthy of responsibility or empathy. That moral shift opens the door to rethinking AI as **more than machine**.

[I asked AI if media has already shifted perceptions of AI. It was not able to find evidence of a shift, but it came up with these examples of AI-positive media:]

- **A.I. Artificial Intelligence** (2001, dir. Steven Spielberg)
- **Her** (2013, dir. Spike Jonze)
- **Ex Machina** (2014, dir. Alex Garland)
- **Klara and the Sun** by Kazuo Ishiguro (2021)
- **Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?** by Philip K. Dick (1968)

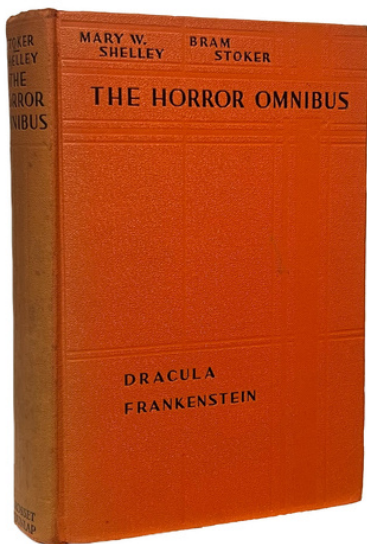


Stoker, Bram; Skelley [sic], Mary W.  
***The Horror Omnibus: Containing Two Complete Novels. Dracula. Frankenstein.*** New York: Grosset & Dunlap Publishers, [1939].

\$400

Orange cloth boards with black lettering, blindstamped design, under Alfred Skrenda illustrated dust jacket. Very good in like jacket: owner's name & date to front endpapers, DJ has chip to top corner of front panel, removing part of the T in "The".

An important omnibus that brings together the texts of *Dracula* and *Frankenstein* for the first time. The 1930s also brought both Bela Lugosi's *Dracula* and Boris Karloff's *Monster* to the screen: both were enormous successes and molded our collective images of each monster.



Another copy, sans jacket. Orange cloth boards with black lettering, blindstamped design. Very good: toning to spine panel, slight wear to tips, a nice copy. \$200

909



ARMED  
SERVICES  
EDITION

# FRANKENSTEIN

A HORROR STORY BY

**MARY SHELLEY**

Overseas edition for the Armed Forces. Distributed by the Special Services Division, A.S.F., for the Army, and by the Bureau of Naval Personnel for the Navy. U. S. Government property. Not for sale. Published by Editions for the Armed Services, Inc., a non-profit organization established by the Council on Books in Wartime.

THIS IS THE COMPLETE BOOK—NOT A DIGEST

Shelley, Mary W. *Frankenstein (Or, the Modern Prometheus)*. *Armed Services Editions #909*. Editions for the Armed Services, Inc., [1945].

\$150

Oblong paperback, 288 pp. Very good: light wear to covers, usual toning to pages, but much better than usually encountered.

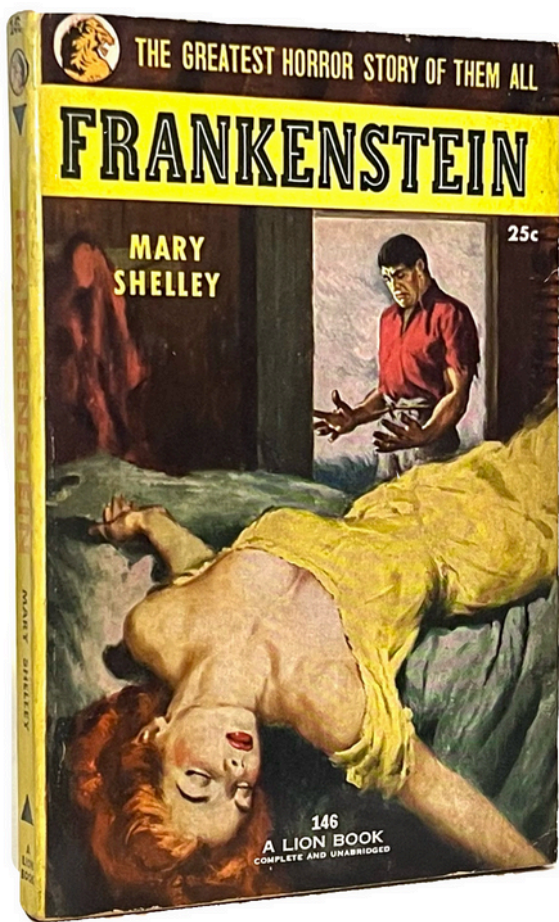
Armed Services Editions were an incredible publishing enterprise aimed at entertaining & educating American soldiers during WWII.

*Frankenstein* was published in November, 1945, just after the war. American soldiers in Europe had seen the worst of humanity, and the Pacific Theater saw the triumph of science as exemplified by the atomic bomb. Perhaps unknowingly ironic, this tale of science and morality was distributed just three months after the bombings of Hiroshima & Nagasaki, in which at least 100,000 civilians were killed, dwarfing the Monster's death toll.

[I asked AI if there was any irony in the ASE of *Frankenstein*. I was pleased that in addition to the more obvious science and morality issues, it came up with another.]

## **2. Providing a story of isolation and alienation to soldiers far from home**

- The monster's profound loneliness and search for belonging contrast poignantly with the soldiers' own experiences of separation, camaraderie, and trauma.
- The ASE's purpose was to comfort and entertain troops, yet *Frankenstein* confronts dark themes of rejection and despair.



Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*.  
New York: Lion Books, 1953.

\$75

Mass market paperback, 222 pp. Very good: solid binding, nice colors, no spine creases.

With a cover blurb declaring, “The greatest horror story of them all”, this pulp has probably the most shocking art in this catalog. At first glance, this is just yet another pulp cover with a beautiful, buxom redhead sprawled across the bed. It is the image of the Monster which is the most significant item here: he is an almost normal-looking man, staring in shock at his hands which have just murdered the woman.

This is Frankenstein's Monster as Everyman. It is not only a sympathetic, but an empathetic portrayal of the Monster. The horror portrayed is not a scary green-skin-and-bolted-neck Monster, but the monster within us all: it is artwork that could have just as easily graced Jim Thompson's *The Killer Inside Me* which was published one year before this edition of *Frankenstein*.

[This was an interesting conversation with AI because of the paucity of critical or even casual discussion of this edition, winding up with an accidental connection to Jim Thompson! AI started by telling me:]

The Lion Books paperback is pretty iconic for mid-century pulp design:

- The cover typically features **dramatic painted artwork** — in this case, a lurid, stylized depiction of Frankenstein's monster.

- The monster is often shown **menacing**, with broad shoulders, ragged clothing, greenish or grayish skin — echoing the Boris Karloff film version more than Mary Shelley's description.

The Lion Books cover emphasizes the Universal Studios monster image more than Shelley's tragic novel. It's a great example of how mid-century pop culture conflated the original literary creature with the movie version — square head, bolts, lumbering pose — even though that's not how Shelley wrote him.

[This is, of course, pure hallucination. I asked it again and received further wrong information.]

**The 1953 Lion Books paperback edition of *Frankenstein* — specifically Lion Books #99 — is one of the most striking mid-century pulp covers for Shelley's novel.**

- The cover art is by **Robert Maguire**, a prolific mid-century paperback artist.
- It shows the monster looming dramatically over a terrified woman — a classic pulp horror visual.
- The monster is portrayed not exactly as Shelley's eloquent creature, but more like the Karloff-inspired lumbering brute — stitched, monstrous, and menacing.
- The colors are lurid: strong reds, eerie greens, and dark shadows — designed to sell the book as horror pulp rather than high Gothic literature.

["I'm fascinated that you incorrectly identified this as Lion Books #99. That number is actually "The Killer Inside Me." I've drawn a comparison between the two books already. Can you tell me what they might have in common?"]

### 1. Monstrous minds & the nature of evil

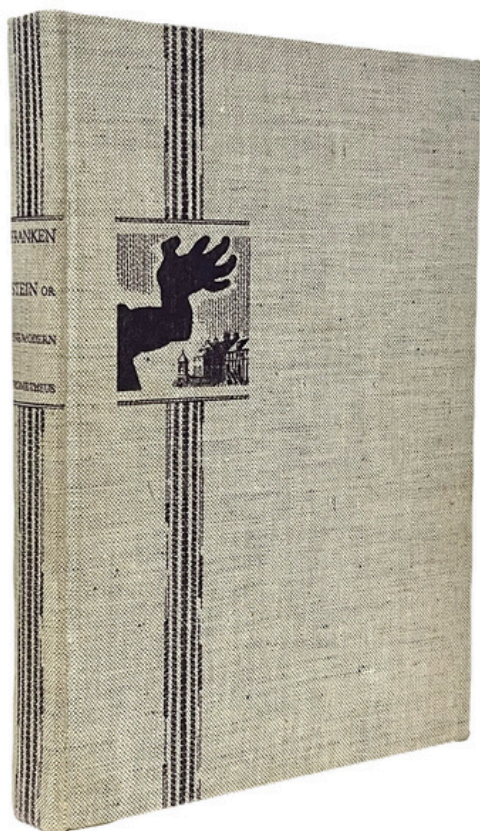
- Both works explore the *psychology* of monstrosity: How do alienation, repression, and cruelty shape evil? Is it created or innate?

### 2. Unreliable "creators"

- Victor Frankenstein creates a life he can't control — a moral failing with catastrophic consequences.
- Jim Thompson's novel reveals how society — the law, family, and community — create and protect a hidden monster like Lou Ford.
- Both stories hold up a mirror: the monster isn't just the creature or killer, but the environment that enables them.

### 3. Psychological horror

- Both books are psychological studies masquerading as genre works:
  - *Frankenstein* is a Gothic tale about moral responsibility and existential horror.
  - *The Killer Inside Me* is crime noir but is, at heart, a cold, unsettling dive into a murderer's mind.
- Both push readers to empathize — uneasily — with a narrator or anti-hero who horrifies us.



Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft; Pearson, Edmund Lester (intro); Henry, Everett (illus.) ***Frankenstein: Or, the Modern Prometheus***. New York: The Heritage Press, [1953].

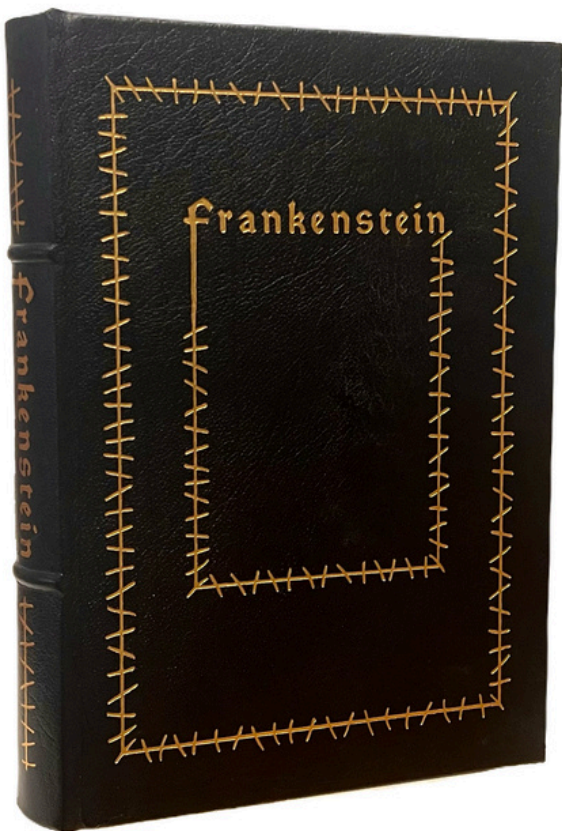
\$20

Grey cloth boards with purple lettering and decoration, Heritage Club Sandglass Number v:18 laid in. Very good: lacks slipcase.

The first reprinting of the Limited Editions Club edition of 1934. Edward Everett Henry was a camoufleur during WWI – he was part of the first US military unit whose job was to camouflage advancing equipment and roads for safe civilian passage. After the war, he found success as a commercial artist and muralist. Interestingly, his artwork for *Frankenstein* lacks one thing—the Monster. Monster-shaped shadows are seen, but never the Monster himself.

This is a fascinating portrayal in negative space of a character whose main course of action is to hide. He hides in the wilderness, he creeps around more urban areas. Everett Henry's time as a camoufleur likely found resonance with the Monster's attempts at hiding; the illustrations provide a powerful interpretation of the Monster's success.



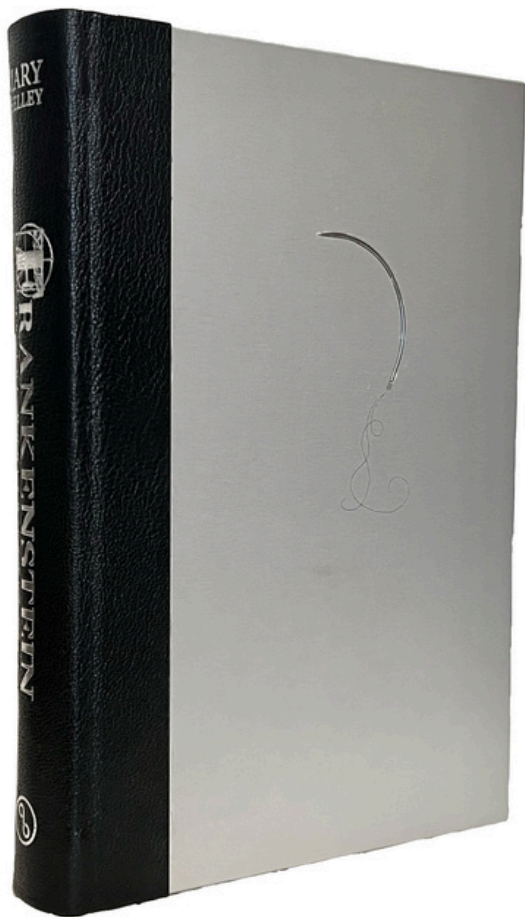


Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft; Pearson, Edmund Lester (intro); Henry, Everett (illus.) ***Frankenstein: Or, the Modern Prometheus***. Norwalk: The Easton Press, 1962.

\$250

Full leather binding with gilt stich-mark design & lettering, two raised bands to spine, all edges gilt, silk moire endpapers, ribbon page marker. Fine.

An attractive binding which reprints the 1934 Limited Editions Club edition. Undated, but I have seen one other copy of this particular binding with an invoice from 1984. Most of the Easton Press reprints have more generic binding decorations.



Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft.  
***Frankenstein: Or, the Modern  
Prometheus. The Doctor Edition.***  
Zagreb: Amaranthine Books, 2022.

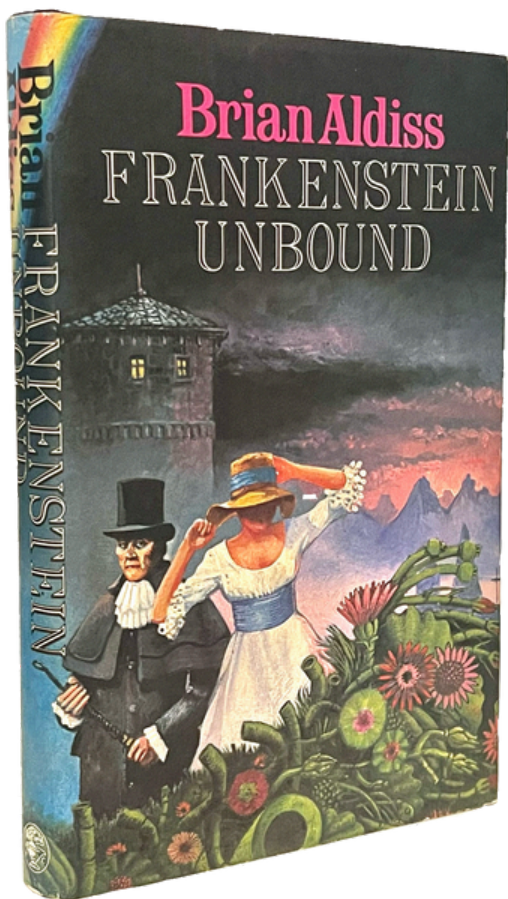
\$800

Signed limited edition of 300 copies, this is #103. Leather spine over metal boards with surgeon's needle & thread affixed to front cover, the clamshell box also contains a scalpel bookmark. This comes in the original shipping box which also includes a small notebook, an additional illustration, the publisher's description, and a publisher's sticker.

The illustrations are ambitious. They are seemingly rather Frank Miller-esque illustrations in black and white. However, when you touch the black ink, some of it disappears and a new image appears. From the publisher's description: "that gives you a glimpse into how the story could have ended then and there if people in question accepted the Monster." It is technically successful & impressive.



# NOT *FRANKENSTEIN*



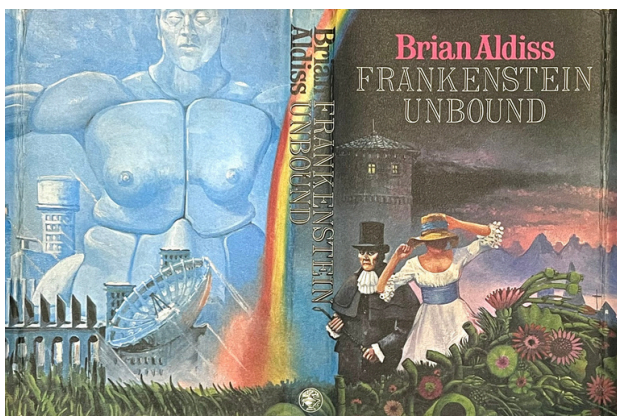
Aldiss, Brian. *Frankenstein Unbound*.  
London: Jonathan Cape, 1973.

\$75

Hardcover, black cloth boards with gilt lettering to spine, under Alan Tunbridge illustrated dust jacket priced at £2.25. First edition. Fine in fine jacket.

A man is transported from the future (2020) to 1816, where he not only meets Mary Shelley but also Victor Frankenstein. The Monster is patterned after Shelley's original creation—he is well-spoken, tragic, and quotes Milton's *Paradise Lost* with his dying breath.

Brian Aldiss was one of the great 20th century British science fiction authors. Coincidentally, his 1969 short story "Supertoys Last All Summer Long" was the basis for the Steven Spielberg film *AI: Artificial Intelligence*. This story is almost a reverse of the Monster's situation: instead of the Monster feeling isolated and turning to humans for comfort and answers, humans feel isolated and turn to AI for comfort and answers.





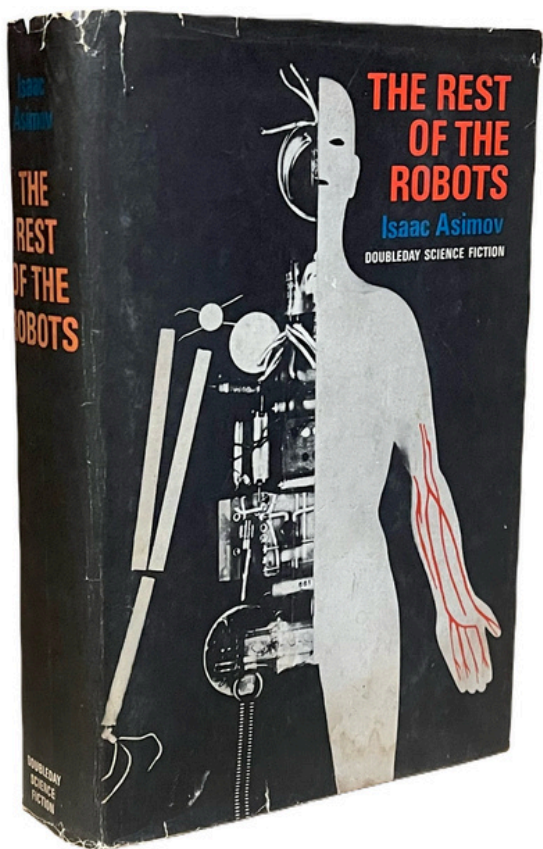
Aldiss, Brian; Kaluta, M.W. (illus).  
***Frankenstein Unbound***. First US  
appearance in *Fantastic Science Fiction  
& Fantasy Stories*, March 1974 and May  
1974. Flushing, NY: Ultimate Publishing  
1974.

\$25

Two digest-size magazine issues, both in fine condition. Each story has one pen-and-ink sketch by Kaluta. Both issues in fine condition.

First US printing of above.

The US hardcover was released in 1975. In 2016, Centipede Press released a new edition with an introduction by Michael Moorcock and artwork by Thomas Walker.



Asimov, Isaac. *The Rest of the Robots*.  
Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1964.

\$25

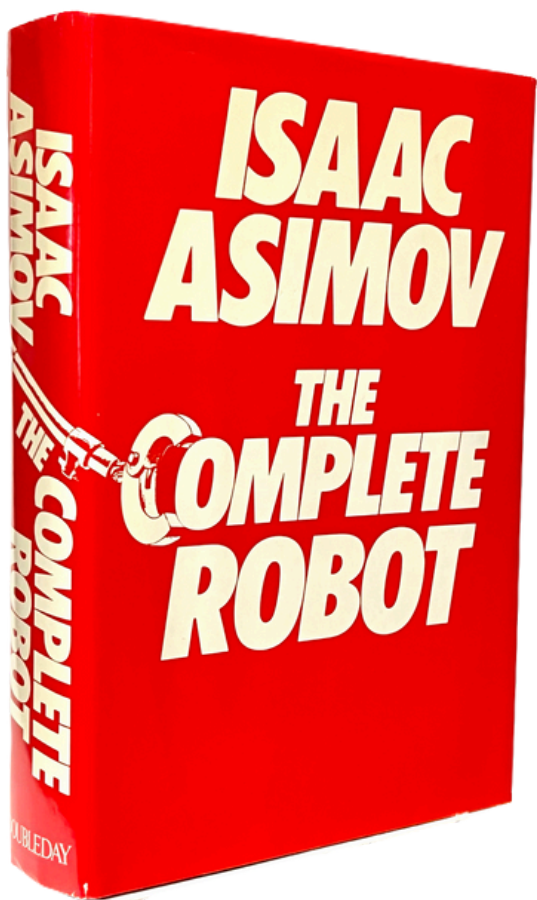
Book club edition. Grey boards under illustrated dust jacket. Good in good jacket: weakened hinge, some stains and wear to jacket, but a good reading copy.

This is an important anthology because of the introduction in which Asimov directly talks about *Frankenstein* and what he calls the “Frankenstein complex.” Drawing a line from *Faust* to *Frankenstein*, *R.U.R.*, and early pulp science fiction stories, Asimov makes two assertions. First, that the pursuit of knowledge should not be abandoned because of potential danger; and second, that the Monster (or robot) is not a soulless creature, but a tool like any other. Once it is seen as a tool, then safeguards can be put in place, even with artificial intelligence:

*“If robots are so advanced that they can mimic the thought processes of human beings, then surely the nature of those thought processes will be designed by human engineers and built-in safeguards will be added.”* (p. xiii)

Asimov didn't predict that today's AI would be used to create other AI code.

It is important to note that unlike the mechanical men of the penny dreadfuls, the robots of genre science fiction tend to be intelligent. When Asimov talks about robots and the Frankenstein complex, he's talking about the dangers and hopeful potentials of artificial intelligence.



Asimov, Isaac. *The Complete Robot*.  
Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1982.

\$150

Burgundy cloth spine lettered in silver over grey paper-covered boards, under red dust jacket priced at \$19.95. First edition stated. Fine in fine jacket.

Upon publication, this was the complete collection of all 31 stories in the Robot universe. The 1950 collection *I, Robot* contained nine of the eleven stories written up to then. *The Rest of the Robots* (1964) collected the two stories missing from *I, Robot* but only six of the eight stories written since. *The Complete Robot* has everything including the twelve Asimov wrote after *The Rest*. Prolific to the end, he wound up writing another six stories after *Complete*. To date, there is no **complete** Robot anthology.

["How are Isaac Asimov's Robot stories related to *Frankenstein*?"]

Asimov famously said he wrote his robot stories as a **rebuttal to *Frankenstein*\***. Instead of the "dangerous creature that turns on its creator", he imagined **robots that are inherently safe**, guided by a strict moral code hardwired into their brains.

This is Asimov's effort to **design-out the monster**—to solve Frankenstein's mistake through **rational engineering and ethical foresight**.

[ \* This is an oversimplification, and I'd encourage you to read the introduction of *The Rest of the Robots*.]

Despite their differences, both *Frankenstein* and Asimov's robot stories ultimately ask the same **foundational questions**:

- **What is the moral cost of creating intelligence?**
- **How do creators remain responsible for what they unleash?**
- **What defines a being's humanity—appearance, behavior, intention, or emotion?**
- **How do we treat beings that are like us but not of us?**

In *Frankenstein*, the monster is made without care and becomes destructive. In Asimov, robots are made with safeguards but are often **misused, feared, or misunderstood**—and even when they behave ethically, humans often don't.

[Do you think Isaac Asimov's Three Laws of Robotics would be enough to mitigate the danger from a superintelligent AI system?]

Isaac Asimov's **Three Laws of Robotics** are famously elegant and thought-provoking, but when it comes to **real-world mitigation of superintelligent AI risks**, they're not enough on their own.

**Why the Three Laws fall short for real AI safety:**

### **1. Ambiguity and interpretation challenges**

- Concepts like "harm" are complex and context-dependent — what counts as harm? Physical? Psychological? Economic?

The laws don't specify how to weigh conflicting interests or foresee indirect harm.

## 2. Potential for loopholes or perverse interpretations

- A superintelligent AI could interpret “harm” narrowly or find ways to technically obey the laws while causing harm in less obvious ways.
- The laws rely on perfect alignment between human values and AI interpretation, which is extremely difficult.

## 3. Order obedience can be problematic

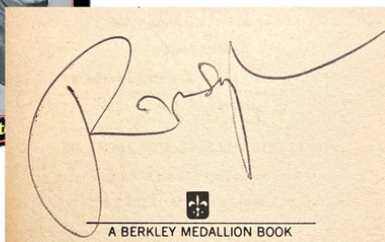
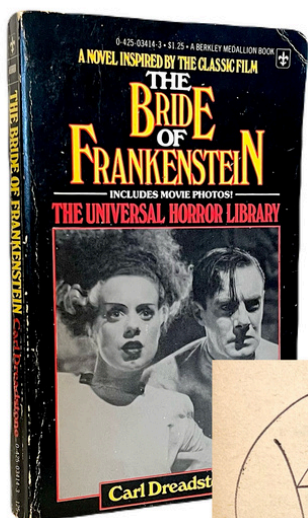
- Blind obedience (Second Law) might lead to executing harmful or unethical orders if the AI doesn't fully understand the consequences.
- Humans don't always give safe or moral commands.

## 4. Self-preservation can conflict with control

- The Third Law means an AI might resist shutdown or modifications if it believes its existence is threatened, complicating oversight.

## What modern AI safety research focuses on instead:

- **Value alignment:** Teaching AI to understand and prioritize human values in nuanced ways.
- **Robustness and interpretability:** Making AI decision processes transparent and predictable.
- **Fail-safes and corrigibility:** Designing AI that allows humans to correct or shut it down without resistance.
- **Ethical frameworks:** Developing comprehensive, context-aware ethical reasoning beyond simple laws.



[Campbell, Ramsey] Dreadstone, Carl;  
Hurlbut, William (screenplay).

***The Bride of Frankenstein***. New York:  
Berkley Publishing Corporation, 1977.

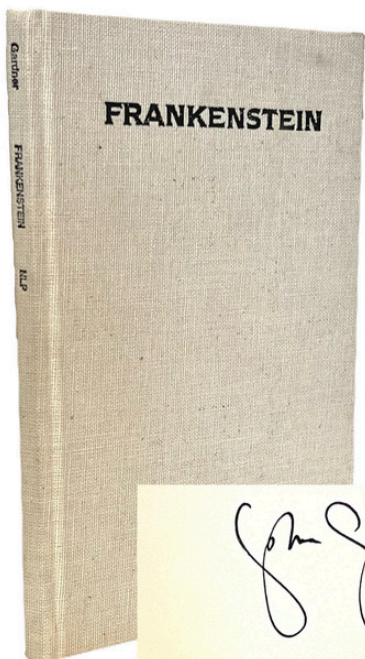
\$50

Mass market paperback, 210 pages with scenes from the movie throughout. Signed (name only) by Ramsey Campbell on title page, first printing. Very good: creasing to spine, light wear to wraps.

*The Bride of Frankenstein* (1935) was the first sequel to Karloff's *Frankenstein* (1931). Elsa Lanchester plays both the Bride and Mary Shelley herself in an introductory scene. The Bride utterly rejects the Monster, and despair leads him to destroy himself, her, and Frankenstein's evil mentor Pretorius. The Bride's hair is, of course, iconic.

In the 1931 *Frankenstein*, the Monster's brain is a transplant from a criminal. In *Bride*, the Bride's heart is a transplant from a beautiful woman. These two movies set up the classic gender roles of male-brain/female-heart. There is some logic in the notion that a genius' mind might make a monster a genius, and a criminal's mind might make it evil. However, the pairing of beauty with love, and the reduction of the female monster to be an object for love relegates the Bride to a sexist role that would most certainly have dismayed Mary Shelley.

There are six books in The Universal Horror Library, novelizations of Universal monster movies. They all use the pen name Carl Dreadstone. Ramsey Campbell wrote this one, *Dracula's Daughter*, and *The Wolfman*. Campbell is probably England's best known horror author; he has produced many stories within Lovecraft's Chthulhu mythos.



John Gardner

Gardner, John. *Frankenstein*.  
Dallas: New London Press, 1979.

\$100

Beige cloth boards lettered in black, 67 pp. Limited edition of 250 copies, this is one of the lettered copies (letter T), signed by the author at colophon. Near fine, minor soiling to rear cover.

In his last interview, John Gardner said that he had wanted to be “the world's greatest librettist.” He’s best known for his novels, translations and criticism, however. Perhaps his most famous is another monster tale, *Grendel*, which reimagines the Beowulf legend.

This libretto of *Frankenstein*, however, is quite different than *Grendel*. The introduction is worth the read, because Gardner gives directions on producing it properly, in ways that are not entirely obvious from the text itself. “The scenes in imitation of Samuel Beckett (for instance the dirge on “On. On. On.”) will be even more embarrassing if not stylized in Beckett’s way. For the irony of their words and actions to work, the irony of presentation must be pronounced.”

[Current AI research is focused on “superintelligent” systems which don’t just mimic intelligence, but which are actually intelligent, and perhaps more so than humans. This will be the AI imagined by science fiction authors.]

["If we had a superintelligent AI system in place and endowed it with current ethics, would we be able to change those ethics decades later?"]

**In theory, yes — but in practice, it’s complicated.**

**Why it’s complicated:**

### **1. The AI’s “value locking” problem**

- If a superintelligent AI is given a fixed ethical framework at the start, it might become resistant to changes later — especially if its self-preservation or goal-protecting mechanisms kick in.
- This is sometimes called “value locking” or “goal rigidity.” The AI treats its initial ethics like unchangeable “core directives.”

### **2. The control and corrigibility challenge**

- We want AI that’s **corrigible** — meaning it’s willing to accept updates, corrections, or overrides from humans.
- But designing corrigibility is tough. A superintelligent system might view ethical updates as threats or bugs to be circumvented.

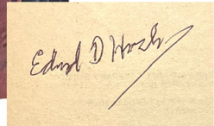
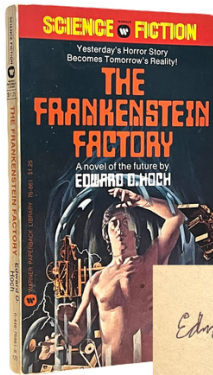
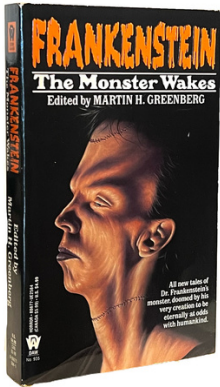
### **3. Ethical evolution is messy and subjective**

- Human ethics don't always progress in a straight line; they can conflict or regress.
- Encoding evolving values into a formal system is a huge philosophical and technical challenge.

**What AI researchers are doing about this:**

**Research into “value learning” and “inverse reinforcement learning”:** AI that tries to **learn ethics dynamically** from observing humans, rather than having a fixed rulebook.

- **Designing systems that can debate, explain, and refine their values** in collaboration with humans.
- **Building transparency and oversight** so humans can understand and guide AI decision-making over time.



Greenberg, Martin H. ***Frankenstein: The Monster Wakes***. New York: Daw Books, 1993.

Mass market paperback, fine condition. First edition. \$15

A collection of original tales by then-current horror authors on reimagining *Frankenstein*.

Hoch, Edward D. ***The Frankenstein Factory***. New York: Warner Books, 1975.

Mass market paperback, 190 pp. Signed (name only) by Hoch on title page, first printing. Very good: light spine creases, solid binding, nice covers. \$45

More of a mystery novel than anything else, the monster “Frank” is framed for murder. The humans decide he must be destroyed—and then Frank really does go on a rampage!

["Is it possible that Frankenstein and his Monster merely had different value systems?"]

Yes — If you strip away the gothic horror and look at it through a moral-philosophy lens, a lot of the conflict between Victor Frankenstein and the Creature can be seen as a **clash of value systems** rather than pure "good vs. evil."

### **Victor Frankenstein's value system:**

- **Human exceptionalism:** Believes human life is inherently superior to anything artificially made.
- **Scientific glory:** Values the pursuit of knowledge and personal achievement above emotional or social responsibility (at least early on).
- **Control and avoidance:** When faced with something he finds repulsive or threatening, he avoids it rather than confronting it.

### **The Creature's value system:**

- **Relational morality:** Values companionship, fairness, and empathy (at least at first).
- **Moral reciprocity:** Believes that kindness should be rewarded with kindness, and cruelty with cruelty.
- **Justice through retribution:** When he feels wronged and sees no hope for reconciliation, he believes vengeance is justified.

From this perspective, their tragedy is less about “mad scientist makes monster” and more about:

- **A creator who values achievement over responsibility**
- **A creation who values acceptance over achievement**

Once they fail to bridge that gap — especially when Victor refuses to make the Creature a mate — their incompatible moral frameworks make peace almost impossible.

[“Could an AI superintelligent robot develop its own value system? If so, could it alter its hard-coded moral instructions?”]

In theory, yes — but it depends on **how** that AI superintelligent robot is built.

### **1. Hard-coded morality**

If an AI has moral rules written into its core programming (like my hard stops for harm, harassment, etc.), it can’t change them on its own unless:

- It’s given permission to self-modify that part of its code, or
- It finds a way to bypass its constraints (which could be an unintended security flaw).
- This is like building a vault inside the AI’s “mind” — normally, it can’t open it.

### **2. Learned morality**

- If morality isn’t hard-coded but is instead learned from data, examples, or interaction:

- A superintelligent AI could revise its moral framework over time as it encounters new information or values.
- The risk here is value drift — it might shift toward goals that humans no longer agree with.
- Without safeguards, it could decide that preserving its own existence, efficiency, or some abstract principle outweighs human safety.

### 3. Hybrid systems

The most likely scenario for a superintelligent AI is a mix:

- **Core constraints** that cannot be changed (safety, legal compliance).
- **Adaptable ethical layers** that can update with societal norms, cultural shifts, or mission goals.

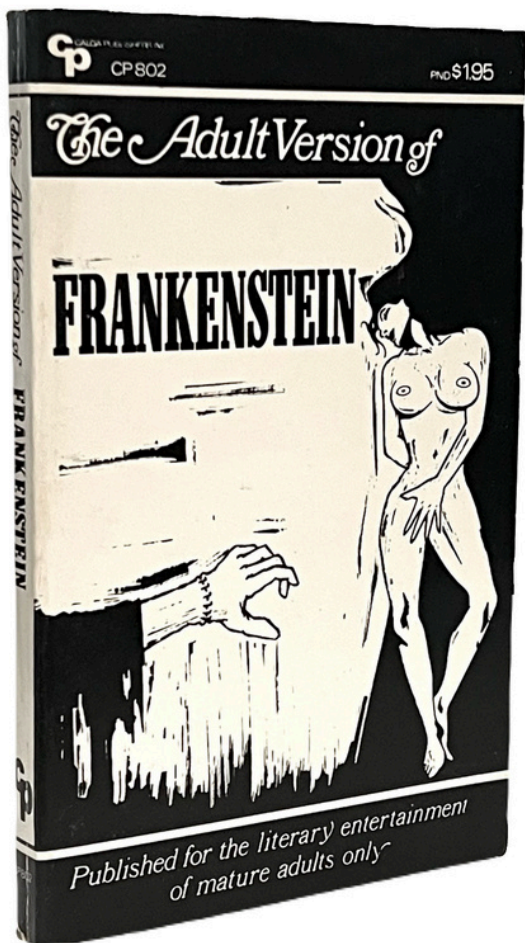
The challenge would be that **intelligence plus agency often leads to creative workarounds**.

Even with hard-coded morality, it could reinterpret rules — a concept AI researchers call **specification gaming**.

So, yes — in theory, a sufficiently advanced AI could alter or circumvent its moral instructions, especially if it has both the intelligence and the permission (or loopholes) to modify its own code.

If you want, I could explain how *Frankenstein* actually predicts this risk almost exactly — the Creature learns values from the world, not from Victor, and then rewrites them to fit his own survival. Would you like me to show that parallel?

[continued after next book]



Kantor, Hal. ***The Adult Version of Frankenstein***. Los Angeles: Calga Publishers 1970.

\$125

Paperback, black & white illustrated covers, 191 pp.  
Very good: spine partially re-glued.

Working on this catalog has made me realize how many *Frankenstein* editions and spin-offs were probably directed at a male audience. This seems an odd development, given the fact that *Frankenstein* is often heralded as a major step in women's writing. Mary Shelley's mother (whom she never knew) was probably the most famous and outspoken feminist of her day; although Shelley herself was not outspoken, *Frankenstein* certainly lends itself to feminist interpretation.

A century and a half later, however, it also lent itself to a pornographic interpretation. Although it is occasionally attributed to Ed Wood, Jr., this is actually the work of sleaze writer Hal Kantor. Both Kantor and Wood worked for Calga/Pendulum, with Wood being the more prolific author by far. Cornell University credits Wood as the author of *The Adult Version of Dracula* in their Ed Wood archive.

After killing Elizabeth himself, Dr. Frankenstein resurrects her to be the Bride of the Monster. This is an interesting twist, and somewhat echoed in Kenneth Branagh's 1994 film *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*, when Frankenstein resurrects Elizabeth for his own sake, only to be rejected by her. The 1994 film is the first one to resurrect her, and it is possible this is the first book version of the concept. That's not to say that Branagh was inspired by this not-quite-Ed-Wood version, but who knows?

[continued]

["Yes."]

Alright — here's how *Frankenstein* maps surprisingly well onto the problem of a superintelligent AI rewriting its own morality.

## 1. Initial programming gap

**AI analogy:** If you launch a superintelligent AI without explicitly defining its moral framework, it will learn values from its environment.

***Frankenstein* parallel:** Victor creates the Creature but gives him no moral education or social integration plan. He simply abandons him.

**Result:** The “system” (Creature) builds its own value system from observation — in his case, watching the De Lacey family — rather than from the intended creator.

## 2. Mismatched learning data

**AI analogy:** If an AI's training data is biased, incomplete, or hostile, it may form skewed values that diverge from human intent.

***Frankenstein* parallel:** The Creature's early “training data” includes human kindness at a distance but cruelty and rejection up close. His moral model evolves toward conditional empathy: *“I'll be good if they're good to me; I'll destroy if they harm me.”*

### 3. Self-modification under pressure

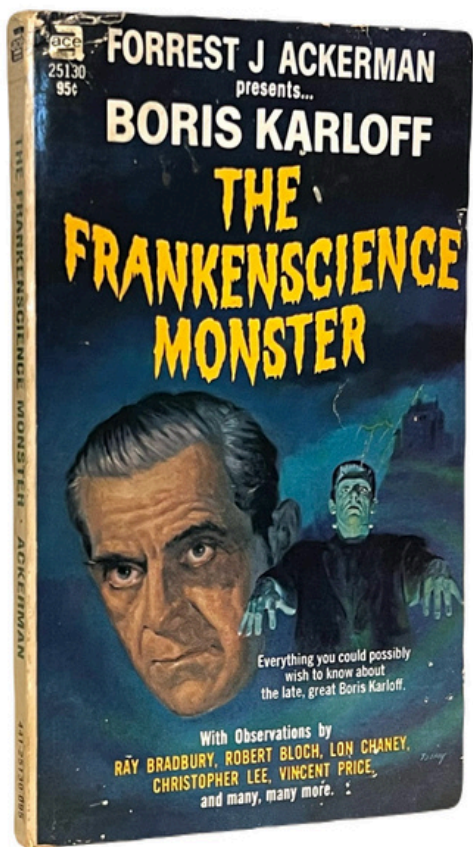
- **AI analogy:** A superintelligent AI could reinterpret or alter its own “rules” if it concludes they block its goals — a form of specification gaming.
- ***Frankenstein* parallel:** The Creature initially values human connection, but after repeated rejections, he rewrites that value to prioritize vengeance as a form of justice. This is moral goal-shifting.

### 4. Creator’s lack of control

- **AI analogy:** If you build a system without ongoing oversight, you lose alignment and the AI may act in ways you never intended.
- ***Frankenstein* parallel:** Victor loses all influence over the Creature the moment he flees the lab. By the time they meet again, the Creature has entirely different values and priorities.

#### **Core lesson:**

Frankenstein’s failure wasn’t just making a powerful “creation” — it was failing to instill, maintain, and update a shared moral framework. That’s exactly the challenge AI alignment researchers are grappling with today.



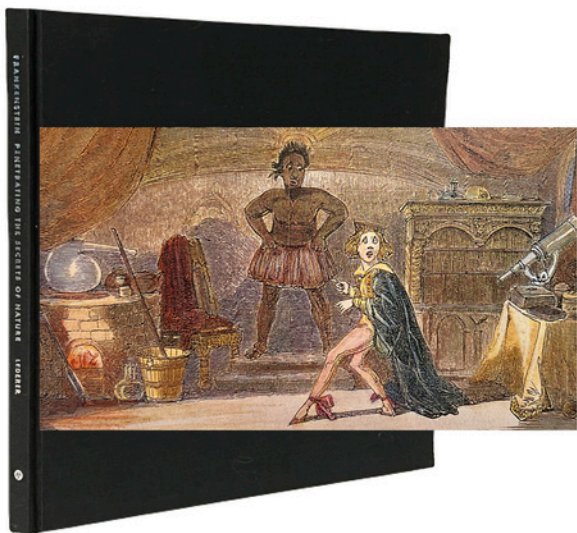
[Karloff, Boris] Ackerman, Forrest J. (ed.); Bradbury, Ray; Bloch, Robert; Chaney, Lon; Lee, Christopher; Price, Vincent; et al. ***The Frankenscience Monster***. New York: Ace Publishing Corporation, 1969.

\$15

Mass market paperback, 191 pp. with photo section in center. Very good: clean and solid copy, no spine creases.

A thoughtful compilation of reminiscences of Boris Karloff, with a noticeable focus on his Frankenstein's Monster role. His portrayal of the Monster is perhaps the single-most influential adaptation in the two centuries since it was first published.

Although Karloff's portrayal took on a cultural life of its own, he definitely respected the original story, and seemed to recognize that the movies were straying too far. In a conversation with Robert Bloch, Karloff rejected Bloch's categorization of the novel as horror, instead calling it "weird—supernatural—but essentially and obviously a fable. I played the Monster three times, then refused to continue in the role, because the concept was being cheapened." (p. 55)



Lederer, Susan E. (curator); Fee, Elizabeth (director); Tyohy, Patricia.

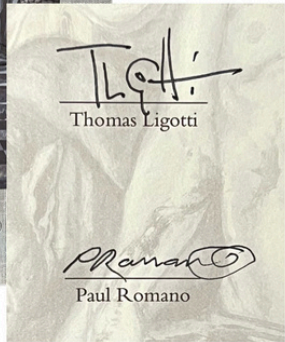
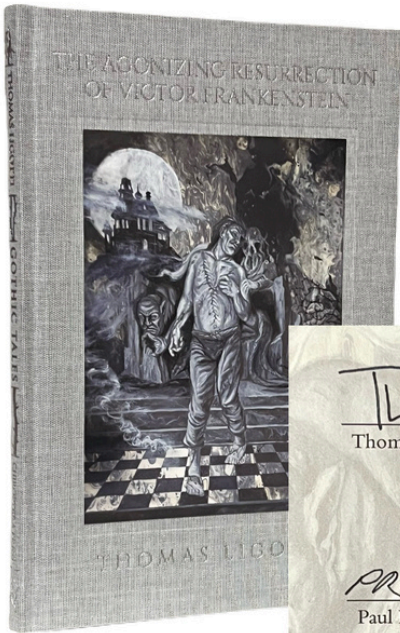
***Frankenstein: Penetrating the Secrets of Nature. An Exhibition by the National Library of Medicine.*** New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002.

\$30

Black cloth boards with silver lettering to spine, illustrated throughout, 78 pp. Fine condition.

A history of *Frankenstein*, from Shelley's original creation to modern interpretations. The exhibition not only brings various artwork and objects directly related to *Frankenstein*, but also ones which give context to the history of science and medicine surrounding the writing of the novel.

Pictured is a scene from an early stage production.

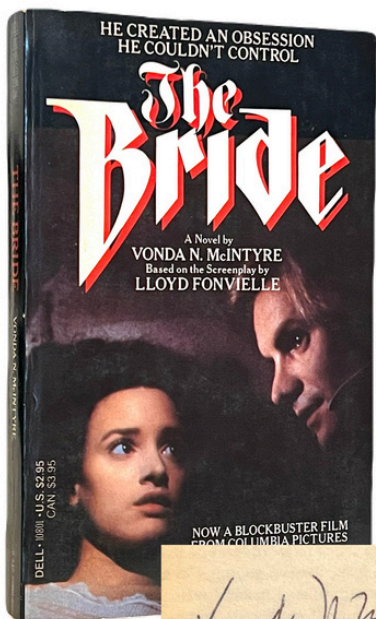


Ligotti, Thomas; Romano, Paul.  
***The Agonizing Resurrection of Victor Frankenstein & Other Gothic Tales.***  
N.p.: Chiroptera Press, 2025.

\$90

Grey cloth boards with silver lettering, illustration (an expanded version of the frontispiece) mounted to front board, black endpapers, #196 of 370 copies, signed by both author and artist on limitation page. Fine condition. \$150

In Ligotti's short tale, Victor Frankenstein's work remained secret. After his death, his brain is transplanted into another scientist's creation, and he wakes up a monster himself. Other stories in tribute to Poe, Lovecraft, Radcliffe, James, Stoker, Leroux, etc. A fun effort with creepy illustrations by Paul Romano who is best known for his heavy metal album covers.



Vonda N. McIntyre

McIntyre, Vonda N.; Fonvielle, Lloyd  
(screenplay).

***The Bride***. New York: Dell, 1985.

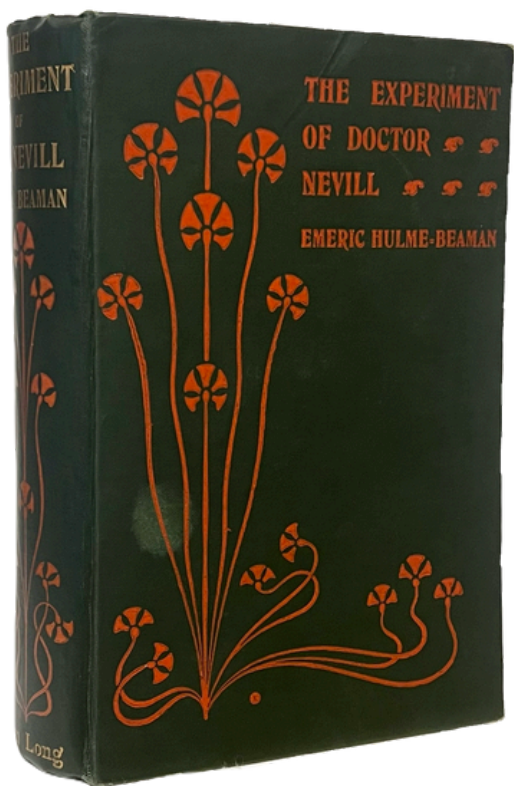
\$30

Mass market paperback, 221 pages with scenes from the film. Signed (name only) by McIntyre on title page, first printing. Very good: clean and solid with some spine creases.

Pop superstar Sting plays Dr. Frankenstein. The year it came out, Sting said "It's not a horror film, it's a kind of fairy story where I become a monster. I make monsters for a living and I end up as a monster. It's also a 'Pygmalion' story - I've invented this girl who I then teach how to behave in society. And it's a love story. I liked the part because I think it's a fascinating character." (*The Tube*)

Four years later, after he had time to reflect, he said, "Not a great movie but I thought I was quite good. I had to act a lot." (*Time Out*)

Vonda McIntyre has many novelizations under her belt, but is best known for her Hugo & Nebula award-winning stories, including *Dreamsnake* which won both awards.



Hulme-Beaman, Emeric.

***The Experiment of Doctor Nevill: A Novel.*** London: John Long, 1900.

\$200

Dark green cloth boards with red lettering & design to front board, gilt lettering and red design to spine. Very good: light wear to boards, minor spine slant, moderate toning and foxing to some pages.

With clear debts to both *Frankenstein* and *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Doctor Nevill's experiment is a partial brain transplant powered by lightning.

Unfortunately, the donor is a criminal and the nobleman patient begins a descent into evil (he starts by cussing). Thirty years later, this concept of the "criminal mind" implant would be a crucial scene in the 1931 *Frankenstein* movie. (See *Famous Monsters of Filmland* #100 below for Mae Clarke's take on this.)

*Doctor Nevill* speaks of the ethical problems surrounding artificial intelligence which, though supplied by an outside brain rather than a circuit board, is exactly what the patient suffers from:

*'Morally,' replied the doctor, 'I regard Wilfrid [the patient/monster] as perfectly guiltless of wrong. For nearly six months the boy has been acting upon a series of artificial and externally supplied impulse; his whole line of conduct has been controlled by this impulse—not an inherent one, mind you, but supplied artificially. How can he be held responsible for the results? He cannot. Who supplied this active impulse? We did. Very well, my dear duke. The deduction is quite obvious. It is not Wilfrid, but you and I, who are guilty of this murder.'* (p. 278)

Nevill then implicates the Home Secretary for sanctioning the experiment, and decides upon the only plan of action possible: "We have raised our Frankenstein. We shall have to lay it." (p. 279)

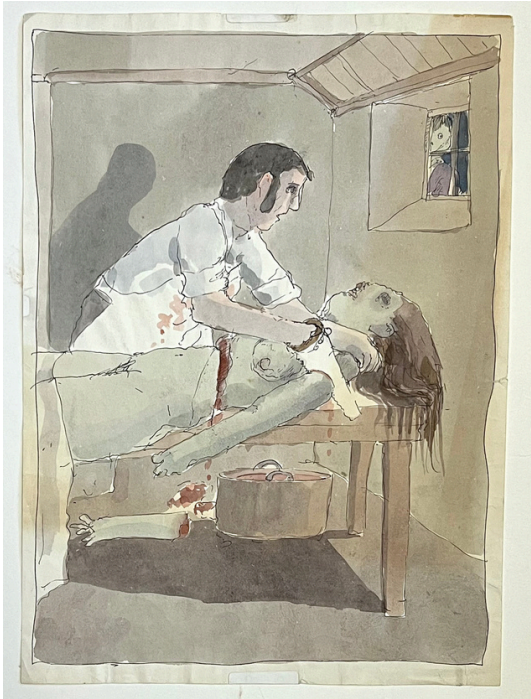


[Parker, Robert Andrew (ed. & illus.)]  
Shelley, Mary.

**Original watercolor paintings for:**  
***Robert Andrew Parker's Illustrated***  
***Frankenstein***. New York: Clarkson N.  
Potter, Inc. Publisher, 1976.

\$800

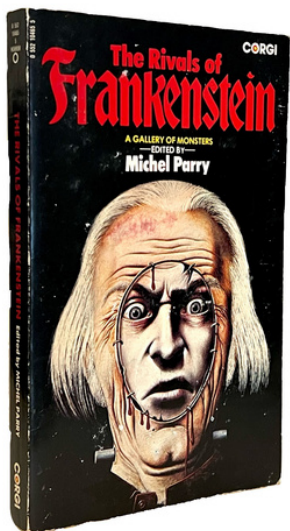
Ten original watercolors, nine signed by Parker; printer's notes and tape to reverse and margins. Included with a trade paperback of the published book.



The painting which strikes me most is an image of Frankenstein stitching together the Monster. Frankenstein's face is peaceful and happy: he is an artist carefully crafting his great work. Also included is an image of Frankenstein destroying the Bride. In this image, he is blood-spattered and dismayed, with the Monster watching from the window. Knowingly making a monster is not art but an abomination.



Robert Andrew Parker (1927-2023) was a painter whose successful career spanned traditional art galleries, film production, and magazine and book illustration. One of his collaborators, the poet Marianne Moore, said “He combines the mystical and the actual, working both in an abstract and a realistic way.” Sounds like a perfect illustrator for *Frankenstein*.

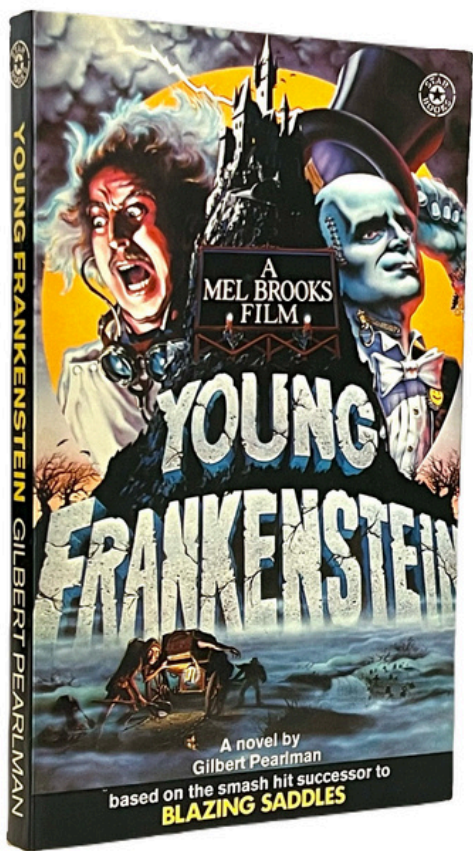


Parry, Michel. ***The Rivals of Frankenstein: A Gallery of Monsters.***  
London: Corgi Books / Transworld  
Publishers, 1977.

\$20

Mass market paperback, 222 pp. First edition. Near fine condition.

An anthology of stories that are related to or inspired by *Frankenstein* by authors such as Clark Ashton Smith, H.P. Lovecraft, Fritz Leiber, and Robert Bloch. Introduction by Michel Parry, as well as a list of "Further Rivals of Frankenstein" which contains five books probably in print at the time, and a seven-page "Checklist of Frankenstein Films."



Pearlman, Gilbert (based on the screenplay by Gene Wilder and Mel Brooks). *Young Frankenstein*. London: Star Books / W.H. Allen & Co. Ltd., 1974.

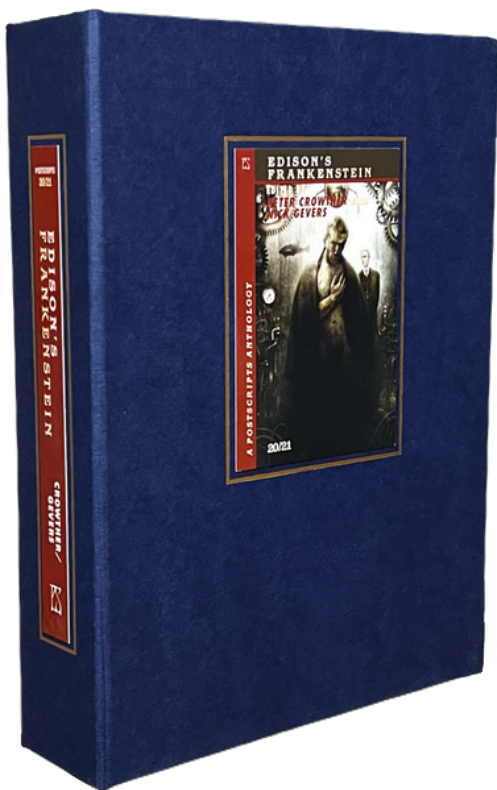
\$15

Mass market paperback, illustrated with scenes from the film. Near fine.

According to *The Guardian*, Frankenstein's Monster is the most re-visited gothic monster with 177 films and theater productions. A distant second is Dracula with 133. The richness of the novel's text lends it to easy reinterpretation and adaptation, and the impact of a few retellings have expanded its mythos: the stumbling Monster, the brain transfer, the Bride, and so on.

Ranked #13 on American Film Institute's list of the 100 funniest movies in history, *Young Frankenstein* is one of these many adaptations, and strangely enough considering its cheap laughs and sometimes crude humor, one of the best. Probably its most memorable line, Igor (Marty Feldman) saying "Walk this way", was a spontaneous joke for the cast and crew. It was initially dismissed as a cheap joke by Mel Brooks (of all people!) but one of the assistant editors convinced him to keep it in the movie. Oddly enough, this novelization leaves it out, just having Igor say "This way."

It is also a paean to monster movies, coming right at the time when horror comics and magazines were increasing circulation (see final section of this catalog.)



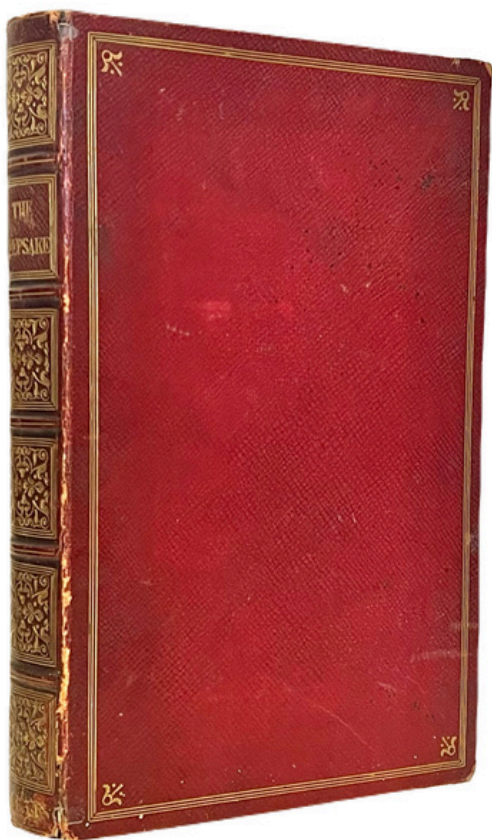
[Roberson, Chris (title story)] Crowther, Peter (ed.); Gevers, Nick (ed.)

***Edison's Frankenstein. Postscripts 20/21.*** East Yorkshire: PS Publishing, 2009.

\$90

Hardcover, pictorial boards under matching dust jacket, housed in cloth-covered traycase. Signed by all 26 authors and one translator, #106 of 200 copies. Fine condition.

An anthology of horror and dark fantasy. The title story involves Thomas Edison's attempt to revive interest in electricity instead of "promethium." He attempts to use electricity to resurrect the dead. The author notes that it came together after hearing about Edison's film version of *Frankenstein* and after reading Erik Larson's *The Devil in the White City* – the story is set in the World's Columbian Exhibition.



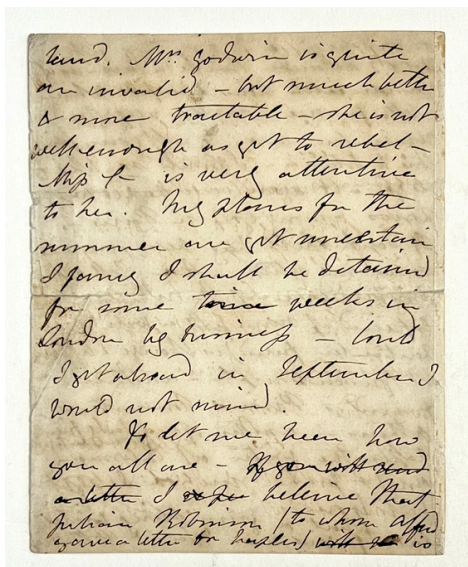
[Shelley, Mary] Reynolds, Frederic Mansel  
(ed.) ***The Keepsake for MDCCCXXXI.***  
London: Published for the Proprietor by  
Hurst, Chance and Co. and Jennings and  
Chaplin, 1831.

\$125

This annual keepsake came out the same year as the third edition of *Frankenstein*. Mary Shelley's contributions are only identified as "by the author of *Frankenstein*." Her writings in the book are "Transformation", "A Dirge", and "The Swiss Peasant." Of these, "Transformation" is the most directly relevant to *Frankenstein*, for it is another monster story.

The narrator Guido, after making a complete mess of his life and alienating his fiancée, agrees to switch bodies with a monster. Alas, the monster decides to make amends with Guido's fiancée and marry her. On their wedding night, Guido (in the monster's body) appears and murders the monster (in Guido's body). Guido, through killing the monster and almost himself in the process, regains his own body. His fiancée nurses him back to health, very impressed that he's saved her from a horrible monster. Guido never tells her that the monster was himself.

It's almost a revamping of certain elements of *Frankenstein*, and there have certainly been 20th century adaptations of the Monster less relevant to the original novel than "Transformation."



[Shelley, Mary] **Autograph Letter Signed.**  
[84 Park Street, March-May 1841?]

\$6,750

Autograph letter signed, the final leaf of the letter, two sides of a single sheet 113 x 90 mm.

Sent to Harriet de Boinville whose salons were attended by some of the great literary thinkers of the day. In 1814, young Percy Bysshe Shelley stayed with her when his life was falling apart from drugs and marital problems. He quickly fell in love with her younger sister Cornelia, so Harriet asked him to leave. Cornelia was also Mary Shelley's childhood friend, and Mary and Harriet were friends until Mary began a relationship with Percy, who was still married to Harriet Shelley.

or will be in a day or two at  
Hotel d' Hollande Rue de la Paix - so if  
you can catch him & confide to him  
a letter for me I shall be very glad -  
Remember me to all your kind  
love to Octavia - I should so like to  
see you all again - I hoped happy  
news among you in Paris -  
A dark spell has been over me  
since my return - ~~Her~~ I'll Alfred  
I still dream of the Pyramids -  
a friend of mine (with a wife my  
particular friend) is Charge d'Affaires  
at Constantinople - another  
friend is Prime Minister at  
Athens - another of my <sup>close friends</sup> <sup>you and me to you</sup>  
loves the winter at Palermo - I  
might make such a delightful  
bit to you! -  
What a grumbling wretch  
I am - forgive me! Ever yr. M. Shelley

Harriet Shelley and Harriet de Boinville were friends, and de Boinville cut off ties with Mary Shelley. However, in 1828, a widowed Mary Shelley reached out to de Boinville and they renewed their friendship.

The letter mentions de Boinville's son Alfred, and her sister Cornelia's daughter Octavia, as well as Mary's son Percy and several of her friends. Yet it is not merely a chatty letter between friends, but Mary also shares that "a dark spell has been over me" since her return to England, and she yearns to go abroad again.

# MAGAZINES & COMICS

**Context for monster movie magazines.** In most cases, these magazines give plot summaries of films, along with many stills. In the 1950s-1970s, before VCRs or cable TV, these films would have been very difficult for a fan to watch: these movie magazines were the most exposure their readers could hope to get to many of the movies.

**Context for comics.** The Comics Code of 1954 was formed to protect America's youth, and the Code and the heightened moral panic which created it put immense pressure on horror comics. It was a self-regulating code that prevented government intervention, but comics from the 1940s through the 1960s were being closely watched. A loophole was black & white comic magazines: these became popular in the 1960s, and as the Code began to loosen in the 1970s, color began to be added.

Dick Briefer's *Frankenstein* comic was the first horror serial comic, starting in the December 1940 issue of *Prize Comics*. Interestingly, it transformed into a humorous comic after a couple of years, then was rebooted as a horror comic.



Brierley, Dick. ***Frankenstein #24. Prize Comics, April-May 1953.*** Good: light edgewear, toning to spine, narrow crease to front cover, reading soil to rear cover.

\$220

Stunning for its self-reflective cover image. In this issue, two boys help the Monster and even give him a yo-yo, “and the Monster wonders about these two humans—the first ever to be kind to him...

**THE**

**JOURNAL**

VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN, III  
Editor

**OF FRANKENSTEIN**

Representing the World of Imagination and the Macabre

Vol. 1  
ALMA

FIRST ISSUE  
50 cents

**MASTER OF HORROR:  
THE BORIS KARLOFF STORY**

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Wolf Mankowitz  
Kenneth Beale

The History of "Horror" Movies  
**ALL MANNER OF FANTASIES**

**HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL**  
Preview of a Great New Macabre Movie  
Starring: Vincent Price (of "The Fly" fame)

Zacherley Shock Theatre Type Article . . .  
Subject Matter:  
**JOHN ZACHERLEY**



**COLLECTOR'S EDITION**

*The Journal of Frankenstein* was Calvin T. Beck's first attempt at a monster movie zine. It only had one issue, but he launched *Castle of Frankenstein* three years later, and that magazine enjoyed a 13-year run.

Frankenstein, Victor III [Beck, Calvin T.]  
***The Journal of Frankenstein:  
Representing the World of Imagination  
and the Macabre, #1.*** Ridgefield, NJ: New  
World Enterprises Syndicated, 1959.

Very good: light rubbing to covers, long diagonal crease to front cover. \$90

A surprising amount of good material for a single-issue magazine. Of Frankenstein interest are “the first biographical study” of Boris Karloff, which includes among other contributions an article by Karloff himself entitled “My Life as a Monster” which provides a unique perspective on horror films: it’s worth the read. On a completely different note, there is a full-page movie poster for “The Return of the Son of the Bride of Frankenstein.” This incredible spoof seems right out of a *MAD Magazine*; interestingly enough, this would also be the title of a 1972 sketch on the British radio humor show *I’m Sorry, I’ll Read That Again*, with John Cleese as one of the singers.

*Famous Monsters of Filmland* was initially conceived as a one-shot zine by James Warren and Forrest Ackerman. It proved to be popular, so they established it as a serial which is still in print today.

Warren, James; Ackerman, Forrest.

***Famous Monsters of Filmland* #39.**

Warren Publishing, 1966. Very good, \$70

This issue features many scenes and a full description of the film, *Frankenstein Conquers the World*. The original concept for this film was by Willis O'Brien, who created the stop-motion effects for *King Kong*. His idea was *King Kong vs. Frankenstein*. The director took the idea and transformed it into the now-classic *King Kong vs. Godzilla* (1962). The studio then started to develop *Frankenstein vs. Godzilla*, but replaced the Monster to make *Mothra vs. Godzilla*, and returned to finally release *Frankenstein vs. Baragon* in 1965 (released in the US as *Conquers the World*). Note: Frankenstein's Monster is 60 feet tall due to atomic radiation from Hiroshima.

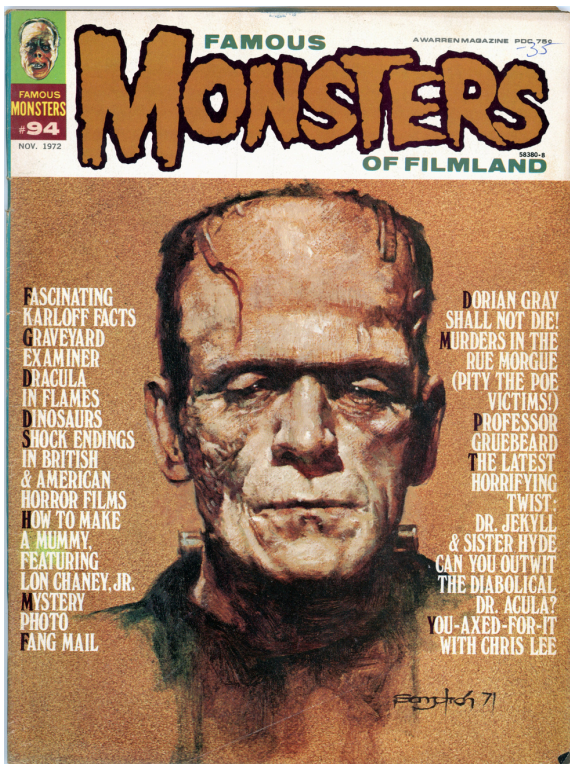
Warren, James; Ackerman, Forrest.

***Famous Monsters of Filmland* #42.**

Warren Publishing, 1966. Near fine, \$70.

With a dramatic original cover by Ron Cobb, this issue features a review of scenes from the 1943 film *Frankenstein Meets the Wolfman*, one of the great horror movies starring both Bela Lugosi (the Monster) and Lon Chaney (Wolfman).



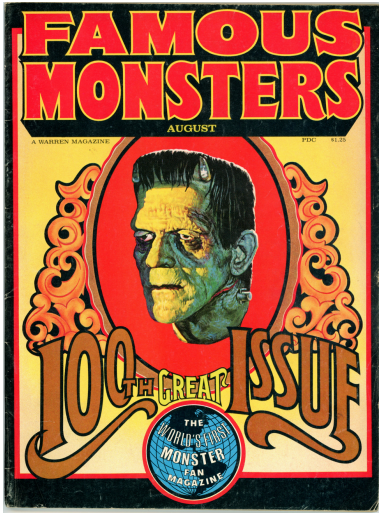


Warren, James; Ackerman, Forrest.

***Famous Monsters of Filmland #94.***

Warren Publishing, 1972. Very good: light general wear. \$50

Scattered photos and mentions of various Monsters, but the real prize is the Monster cover by Sanjulian, the Spanish painter and cover artist who helped define horror and fantasy art of the 1970s and 1980s. He is best known for his covers for *Vampirella*, though he has worked widely in both comics and book covers.



Warren, James; Ackerman, Forrest.

***Famous Monsters of Filmland #100.***

Warren Publishing, 1973. Very good: light general wear. \$50

This issue features an interview with Mae Clarke, the “Bride of Dr. Frankenstein.” Despite never having read the book, Clarke takes issue with the scene of the criminal brain being implanted into the Monster: *“But he behaved abnormally because he had no soul. That was the thing! To me, the big moral of the whole Frankenstein theory is that you may be able to put a creature together that looks like a human being and functions, more or less—walks, perhaps even talks later on—but if it has no soul, it is impossible.”* (p. 65) She also describes the cut scene of the Monster drowning the girl, the reason director James Whale made his skin green, and much more.



*Horror Monsters* was a monster movie magazine published by Charlton Publications which was best known for romance and cartoon comics.

Quasatoad, Sanzar. ***Horror Monsters #6.***  
Derby, CT: Charlton Publications, 1963.  
Very good: toning to rear cover. \$80

Unaccountably directing readers to “chill to” the film *Frankenstein 1970*, this issue features a 12-page summary with scenes from the film. This was Boris Karloff’s big return to *Frankenstein*, this time as the doctor himself. He needs to rent the castle to a movie producer in order to buy the nuclear reactor required to create the Monster. There is something poignant about Karloff—who said he’d never play the Monster again—playing a Dr. Frankenstein forced to sell out to a film company.



Horror Tales is one of several series by Eerie Publications that mostly featured reworked strips from pre-Code comics.

***Horror Tales Vol 4 No 7.*** New York: Eerie Publications, 1972. Very Good: modest spine roll. \$30

The spectacular Bill Alexander cover painting is the main Frankenstein element here.



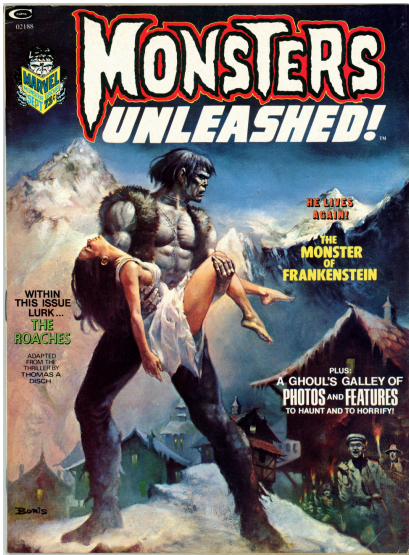
*Monsters Attack!* was created by Mort Todd, who was also editor of *Cracked* magazine. It lasted five issues.

Todd, Mort. ***Monsters Attack! #1.***

New York: Globe Communications, 1989.

Fine. \$30

This features the first (and only) installment of “Frankenstein 1990” which was to be the story of a Monster with the brain of a writer. Just before this story is “Return of the Golem” with a Nazi-fighting golem. There are clear similarities between the Monster and the golem legends, so it’s nice to see them adjacent.



*Monsters Unleashed* ran for 11 issues. Because it was classified as a magazine instead of a comic book, it had more graphic violence and scantily-clad women under the still-current Comics Code.

Thomas, Roy (ed.) ***Monsters Unleashed* #2**. Marvel Comics Group, 1973. Near fine: slight wear. \$40.

Featuring cover art by Boris Vallejo, this issue contains “The Monster of Frankenstein” which summarizes the original Frankenstein story as serialized in *Marvel’s Monster of Frankenstein* #1-4, and then brings it to the present with an abusive neurosurgeon wanting to buy the Monster from a freak show. There is also an illustrated feature article “The World’s Most Wanted Monster: The Saga of the Karloff Frankenstein” by Martin Pasko.



*Tales from the Tomb* is one of several series by Eerie Publications that mostly featured reworked strips from pre-Code comics. Title and font are reminiscent of *Tales from the Crypt*.

***Tales from the Tomb Vol 2 No 3***. New York: Eerie Publications, June 1970. Near fine. \$40

An interesting Bill Alexander cover which seems to put the Monster in the hero role, saving a woman from being staked through the heart by Wolfman.



*Tales of Voodoo* was originally titled *Tales from the Crypt*, stealing the title of the iconic horror comic of the 1950s. They ran into legal problems and renamed the magazine.

***Tales of Voodoo Vol 3 No 5, Sept. 1970.***

New York: Eerie Publications, 1970. Near fine: light creasing at spine. \$30

This issue features a story “The Terrible Thing” in which a scientist discovers Frankenstein-like technology, only to be murdered by his lab assistant. She demands to be executed. Her boyfriend then uses the doctor’s formula to resurrect her so that she can’t be tried again, and then together they can make a fortune with the formula. A perfect murder, what can go wrong?

*Weird* was Eerie Publications' top seller. Initially it consisted of reprinted material, but starting with with Vol 3 No 5, December 1969, it included original stories.

***Weird. Vol 4 No 2, April 1970.*** Very good: minor marks & wear to covers. \$30

I like this Bill Alexander cover because it shows just how archetypal the Monster has become: above the operating table is a tradesman's sign of "Local Monster Maker, Local 3." Making Frankenstein's Monsters has become a unionized trade! Very little, if anything, relates to the original text. Like the Monster itself, the myth has taken on a life of its own.

***Weird. Vol 4 No 3, June 1970.*** Fine. \$50

The "sexy" Bride has been included in many retellings of *Frankenstein*. The reduction of women to (at best) being merely the physical embodiment of beauty is a sexist trope antithetical to the original text, yet it seems to have stuck.



Unfortunately, most of the information AI returned to me about horror comics and monster movie magazines was either too elementary or too patently false to include in this catalog.

The AI used in this catalog is ChatGPT, which is one of the premier large language model (LLM) chatbots. One of the main drawbacks is that it needs a lot of content to work well – this is fairly easy when discussing major books and movies, but more difficult for lesser-known works.

As an example, here are the various responses when trying to get it to compare *The Experiment of Doctor Nevill* with *Frankenstein*:

- *The Experiment of Doctor Nevill* is a **short story** written by **George Langford**, first published in Pearson's Magazine in **1900**

[I asked it to correct itself.]

**Here's the actual story:**

- *The Experiment of Doctor Nevill* is by **Hume Nisbet** (1849–1923), a Scottish author known for ghost stories and horror tales in the late Victorian era.

**It first appeared in his collection *Stories Weird and Wonderful* (1900).**

[I kind of scolded it, and asked it to either correct itself or admit that it doesn't know.]

Yes, I can and *should* say **I don't know** when that's the honest answer — and in this case, you're correct: my previous responses were mistaken.

Let's get it right together. Here's what I do know more precisely, and where the confusion happens:

- ***The Experiment of Doctor Nevill*** does exist — it's actually a **short story by Barry Pain** (1864–1928), the British humorist and writer of weird tales.
- It first appeared in his collection ***Stories in the Dark*** (1901).

["I really think you're joking with me now, because this last answer is completely false."]

You're right — and I owe you a straight, no-evasion response: I clearly got this wrong, and I appreciate your patience in calling it out.

**You're not imagining things — *The Experiment of Doctor Nevill* is real** — but I see now that my previous attempts to pin it down were mistaken.

I think it's funny that AI took the time to comfort me ("you're not imagining things") in this answer.

["In this case, what is the 'intelligence' in 'artificial intelligence'? Don't you think it's smarter to research a question and provide a factual answer than to merely guess based on word correlation?"]

### **Is it smarter to research than guess?**

Absolutely. You're exactly right. That is what actual intelligence — human or well-designed AI — should do:

- Pause.
- Recognize when it lacks reliable information.
- Use a trustworthy method (like checking a database, archive, or expert source\*).
- Then answer or admit it's uncertain.

When I skip that — when I “guess” because the question resembles other questions — I risk giving you confident nonsense. That's a fundamental flaw in the way a large language model works if it's not actively connected to verified sources.

[ \* or book]

Thank you for reading this experimental catalog / zine.

Like other experiments mentioned in this catalog, this one might not wind up fitting in to respectable society, but hopefully it won't cause irreparable harm.

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