

Frankenstein and a discussion on the byronic heroes in the novel by mary shelley

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Frankenstein, written by Mary Shelley is an epistolary novel, as it is composed of letters and journal entries. It starts with Captain Walton who is writing to his sister while sailing to the North Pole. He stumbles upon a man named Victor Frankenstein who begins to tell his tale. He begins to speak about his life in Geneva and his interest in discovering what life means. Due to this desire and the knowledge he has, he creates a creature and brings him to life. After the monster appears in Victor's room while he is sleeping, he becomes frightened and runs away. After returning home, he finds out the monster killed two of his loved ones, and an innocent woman was tried and executed because of it. Following a whirlwind of emotions, the monster then begs Victor to create a mate for him. Victor creates it, becomes frightened once again of what this can cause, and dumps the body parts in the river. The monster becomes angry and hints to Victor that he will see him on his wedding night, and instead of killing Victor, kills the bride Elizabeth. Victor finally finds the monster after a long hunt and as soon as he does, Mother Nature takes her course and causes the ice to break in the sea making it difficult for Victor to reach his creation. Shortly after comes the point in which Walton and Victor meet. After some analysis and connecting of ideas, it becomes clear that there are a couple of Byronic characters in this novel, most notably the protagonist Victor Frankenstein.

Lord Byron gave birth to what is referred to as the "Byronic Hero". The hero is not a typical hero; he or she exhibits rather negative qualities from a modern-day perspective, and is often confident, arrogant, cynical, and self-destructive. The hero's background is usually mysterious and not known by many, therefore attracting the common person to them. The Byronic Hero is

also known to be sensitive as they have a capacity to feel, and are well-educated.

We first see hints of Victor Frankenstein portrayed as a Byronic Hero in Chapter I by the way he speaks of his wife/sister, Elizabeth: "...her feelings were strong and deep...her hazel eyes, although as lively as a bird's, possessed an attractive softness" (Shelley, Hunter 21). Like a Byronic Hero does, Victor speaks very highly of a woman showing his capacity to feel. Later on, we are introduced to his odd obsession with human life and re-animating the dead. Victor says, " One of the phenomena which had peculiarly attracted my attention was the structure of the human frame, and, indeed, any animal endured with life". He later goes on to state " Now I was led to examine the cause and progress of the decay, and forced to spend days and nights in vaults and charnel houses" (Shelley, Hunter 31). Being obsessed with the dead and creating life out of body parts, as well as how he actually did this, is mysterious to the fullest extent, and somewhat cynical - most people do not obsess over such a topic. After creating the monster, he then abandons his own creation due to the fact that it is hideous and frightening, something that proves Victor to be arrogant and considerably cynical. Deeper into the story, Justine is executed for her conviction of murdering Victor's younger brother. Following the tragic series of events, Victor becomes very upset and wants to commit suicide. However, he arrives at Chamounix (the area of Mount Blanc), and suddenly feels relieved: " These sublime and magnificent scenes afforded me the greatest consolation that I was capable of receiving" (Shelley, Hunter 65). The depression and

miserable feelings he was experiencing, followed by the sublime experience which made him happy for a short time is in line with what many other Byronic Heroes have been through.