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Steampunk: Mary Shelley's Frankenstein



Synopsis

Everyone is familiar with Mary Shelley's classic novel, but no one has read it like this! Frankenstein is the long celebrated gothic tale of a science experiment gone awry. But in this brand-new edition, Shelley's haunting horror story is transformed with the addition of steampunk-inspired art. With elaborate full-color illustrations throughout, this is a truly unique interpretation of Frankenstein. It's a fresh look at a classic story, spiked with gadgets, fashion, and steam-powered machinery inspired by the hottest trend in science-fiction. Releasing just in time for summer reading, teens will enjoy this classic novel with an awesome steampunk twist!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 9 Up-Steampunk...Frankenstein combines the third edition of Mary Shelley's book with new illustrations. The introduction does an excellent job of explaining the choice of manuscript-the third edition was the first to include a personal introduction by the author-as well as the reasoning behind the marriage of the classic sci-fi novel and the gothic/Victorian style of art. The personal introduction by Shelley provides the necessary context to set the stage for the highly atmospheric quality of this unique edition. The classic tale tells of Dr. Frankenstein's discovery of the essence of life and creation of an animated being that later becomes a rampaging monster. Traditionally known as the precursor to the modern science fiction genre, it was written with the flowery language and richly descriptive style typical of that time period. The dramatic nature of the story pairs well with the richly hued style of art found throughout. However, the serious nature of the plot is not always

complemented by the bespectacled figures featured in the accompanying illustrations. For those uninitiated to the steampunk style, the characters could simply look like goofy individuals in goggles. While fans of steampunk will likely enjoy this offering, this title will not win any new converts to the genre. Readers who enjoy classic literature will love this story with or without illustrations, so this book is strictly an additional purchase. -Sunnie Sette, New Haven Public Library, CT
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The Writer's Journey(blog)
"Basic and Sumberac do an extraordinary job of reinterpreting the story without changing a single word. The madness of the creator and the terror of the creature are on full display in the illustrations, a grand marriage between Mary Shelley's writing and the imagination of the artists.
Asbury Park Press
"Sometimes, you want to stop traffic. You want people to nudge you and ask: "What the heck is that you're reading?" It may be the cover art or just the title that arrests their attention. ... Just a few moments leafing through the pages of the classic story, illustrated by Zdenko Basic and Manuel Sumberac, will make you wonder what took them so long to get "Frankenstein" to the Steampunk genre. A perfect mating.
San Francisco Book Review"Frankenstein goes quite well with the steampunk style. With its gritty post-industrial imagery, the dark ambiance of these illustrations does a wonderful job helping readers visualize the story| the photoshop-esque style of these particular pictures support the story fantastically. Between the pictures and the generous double-spaced layout of the text, this is one edition of the story that is meant to be lingered over, enjoyed languidly and thoroughly. A beautiful version of a classic story; this is a must-have for any steampunk fan's library."

I now have read Mary Shelley's Frankenstein for the third time in my "reading life". I came to this "steampunk" edition after searching for a copy to read for my Classical Book Group in Seattle. Else, it would not have been on my "list". And so it is with classical books, we discover them again because we have.....like me..... a duty to our Book Group or maybe it is required reading for a high school or college literature class. I am grateful for book groups and required reading lists!To briefly recap the story line: Victor Frankenstein, the "mad scientist" who sought the secret of creating life, is rescued from a frozen ice floe in the Arctic by sailors seeking a Northwest Passage. He tells his tale to the ship's captain. The tale consists of Frankenstein successfully creating a living being from body parts dug from graveyards, and a mysterious chemistry he has discovered. Frankenstein

returns to his studio to find he has created an ugly "monster", from which he flees and abandons. The monster, though maybe 8-feet tall is a "naïf's child". Despite his horrific appearance, he seeks love, affection and acceptance among humans....which he does not receive. He then begins a series of horrific acts of revenge calculated to punish his creator who has spurned him. The story ends with a climactic confrontation between Victor Frankenstein and the monster. The themes are classic in this edition which is accompanied by Steampunk illustrations. The twin aspects of good and evil in human nature are evident in the creator, V. Frankenstein and the created monster. By seeking to be a co-creator, like his own God, Frankenstein creates an image of himself where evil and good exist side-by-side. Frankenstein is a cautionary tale for present day biological engineers, creators of artificial intelligence, and roboticists. If indeed, in any field, we attain a technological singularity where our creations become self-aware and self-sustaining, they will reflect our complex nature. Seeing so clearly how our imagined and real creations can be both good and evil, in our own image, we can only again meditate on what we believe about our own creator. There is ample evidence in the sacred texts of all religions of this complex multi-dimensional aspect of a supreme being. You, the reader of this review, might wonder what is meant by "Steampunk". From Wikipedia: "Steampunk is a subgenre of fantasy and speculative fiction that came into prominence in the 1980s and early 1990s. The term denotes works set in an era or world wherein steam power is still widely used—usually the 19th century, and often set in Victorian era England—but with prominent elements of either science fiction or fantasy, such as fictional technological inventions like those found in the works of H. G. Wells and Jules Verne, or real technological developments like the computer occurring at an earlier date." The Running Press edition of this classic book contains illustrations in a "steampunk" style. On finishing, the reader should check out the web site of Running Press http://www.runningpress.com/search-results?keyword=steampunk&bisac_heading=combined&order=relevance&from=advanced which has published other Steampunk editions of HG Wells and Edgar Allen Poe.

This hefty little volume is a beautifully rendered version of Mrs. Shelley's science fiction horror classic. The marriage of technology and biology makes Steampunk a perfect style for the story of Frankenstein. The typeface is bold and clear, and the illustrations are rich with images that stay with a reader long after the book is closed. This one is a keeper.

I love this idea of just pairing the original text of Frankenstein with new Steampunk illustrations. I am

glad they didn't just rework the book to match the pictures. I would highly recommend this one to fans of Steampunk and Frankenstein, as a unique piece for your bookshelves.

This is such a fabulous version of the classic story. Zdenko Basic is my new favourite artist. I am purchasing all I can find of his work. And getting several more copies of this for daughters to have since they want mine!

Thanks!

IMPORTANT NOTE: this is not a new book of short stories or whatever, but a steampunk-illustrated edition of Mary Shelley's original book. But the steampunk theme works remarkably well with "Steampunk: Mary Shelley's Frankenstein," which starts off rather slow but builds into a tragic, darkly hypnotic tale about tampering in God's domain, and the terrible consequences that come from it. Also: if you create a new creature out of dead body parts, don't disown him or he'll kill your family. During a trip across the Arctic, a ship picks up a starved, half-frozen man named Victor Frankenstein. As he recovers, Frankenstein tells them his life story -- especially about how he became fascinated with science, and developed a process to reanimate dead tissue. Eventually he constructs a new creature out of dead body parts, and brings him to life. But while the creature is intelligent and articulate, he's also hideously ugly. Horrified that he's not beautiful, Frankenstein flees... and has a nervous breakdown. Wimp. But months later, the murder of his little brother brings Victor back to his home, where he figures out that the creature was involved. And to his horror, the creature now wants a mate. But the loathing between them -- caused by Frankenstein's disgust and the creature's increasing bitterness -- leads to even more tragedy... "Frankenstein" is one of those rare novels that is almost beyond classification -- it's gothic horror, it's sci-fi, it's a tragedy about scientific ambition that goes where it shouldn't go. Mary Shelley was only eighteen years old when she began writing this book, but she interwove religion, science and a fiercely intelligent knowledge of human nature into it. Her writing is a bit stuffy at times ("All praises bestowed on her I received as made to a possession of my own"), but that's because it was written in the early 1800s. Despite this, Shelley's writing skills shine in the more horrific moments of the story ("I saw the dull yellow eye of the creature open; it breathed hard, and a convulsive motion agitated its limbs"), and she imbues it with a sense of painful, grimy suspense. But the complicated characters of Victor and the creature are what really make the story work. Victor is actually a pretty horrible person -- while he's a tragic figure whose unnatural ambitions end up destroying his wife, brother and father, he's also incredibly

cruel and callous to the creature because... he's ugly. The creature, on the other hand, instantly gets our sympathy. He's intelligent and childlike at first, but his ugliness causes everyone to immediately hate and fear him. When he becomes embittered and eventually murderous, you still feel sorry for him. And how does the steampunk artwork in this edition work? Surprisingly well. While the novel predates steampunk by almost two hundred years, it has a grimy, gloomy atmosphere that clicks with the steampunk style. The pictures here are done in the style of old sepia photographs, with bright splashes of color amidst industrial greys. They're very realistic -- although at times the images are murky, and other times they're clearly defined. "Steampunk: Mary Shelley's Frankenstein" is an excellent edition of a brilliant book -- it adds a little more of that scientific gothic atmosphere to a classic tale of horror, slime and sorrow.

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