

Quotations in *Frankenstein* (1831 Edition)

Quotations

- Memorise **key quotes** for:
 - Characters: Words that reveal personality or motivations.
 - Themes: Phrases that encapsulate major ideas.
 - Imagery or Symbols: Words or phrases that enhance understanding of the text's style.

Quotations play a vital role in understanding the characters, themes, and imagery in *Frankenstein*. They reveal personality traits, encapsulate the novel's central ideas, and highlight the powerful symbolism Shelley weaves throughout the text.

Characters: Words that Reveal Personality or Motivations

Victor Frankenstein

- *"I had worked hard for nearly two years, for the sole purpose of infusing life into an inanimate body."*
 - **Relevance:** This quote illustrates Victor's obsessive ambition and dedication to his scientific pursuits. It highlights his hubris and lack of foresight regarding the consequences of his actions.
- *"Learn from me, if not by my precepts, at least by my example, how dangerous is the acquirement of knowledge."*
 - **Relevance:** Victor reflects on the destructive nature of his pursuit of forbidden knowledge, serving as a warning to both Walton and the reader.
- *"You are my creator, but I am your master; obey!"* (The Creature to Victor)
 - **Relevance:** This line signifies the reversal of power dynamics between Victor and the Creature, showing Victor's loss of control over his own creation.

The Creature

- *"I was benevolent and good; misery made me a fiend."*
 - **Relevance:** The Creature highlights its initial innocence and how rejection by society transformed it into a vengeful being.
- *"If I cannot inspire love, I will cause fear."*
 - **Relevance:** This line encapsulates the Creature's descent into bitterness and violence after repeated rejections.
- *"I am malicious because I am miserable."*
 - **Relevance:** The Creature justifies its actions, linking its behaviour to the neglect and isolation it has experienced.

Elizabeth Lavenza

- *"I have a pretty present for my Victor—tomorrow he shall have it."*
 - **Relevance:** Elizabeth's innocence and love for Victor are highlighted here, contrasting sharply with the tragedy that awaits her.

Captain Walton

- *“I preferred glory to every enticement that wealth placed in my path.”*
 - **Relevance:** Walton’s ambition mirrors Victor’s, making him a foil to Frankenstein and reinforcing the dangers of unchecked ambition.
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Themes: Phrases that Encapsulate Major Ideas

Ambition and the Pursuit of Knowledge

- *“Seek happiness in tranquillity, and avoid ambition.”* (Victor)
 - **Relevance:** Victor’s final warning to Walton underscores the novel’s critique of reckless ambition and the pursuit of knowledge without consideration of consequences.

Creation and Responsibility

- *“You are my creator, but I am your master; obey!”* (The Creature)
 - **Relevance:** This line reflects the consequences of Victor’s failure to take responsibility for his creation and the power dynamic that results.

Isolation and Loneliness

- *“I am alone and miserable; man will not associate with me.”* (The Creature)
 - **Relevance:** The Creature’s isolation drives its actions and highlights the theme of societal rejection.

Justice and Injustice

- *“The guilty are allowed, by human laws, bloody as they are, to speak in their own defence before they are condemned.”* (Victor)
 - **Relevance:** Victor reflects on Justine’s wrongful conviction, illustrating the failure of human justice and the consequences of prejudice.
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Imagery or Symbols: Words or Phrases that Enhance Understanding of the Text’s Style

Light and Fire

- *“What could not be expected in the country of eternal light?”* (Walton)
 - **Relevance:** Light symbolises discovery and knowledge, but the Arctic’s harsh environment also foreshadows the dangers of overreaching ambition.
- *“You seek for knowledge and wisdom, as I once did; and I ardently hope that the gratification of your wishes may not be a serpent to sting you.”* (Victor)

- **Relevance:** The serpent imagery suggests the double-edged nature of knowledge, likening it to temptation and sin.

Nature

- “*The rain pattered dismally against the panes, and my candle was nearly burnt out.*”
 - **Relevance:** The gloomy weather mirrors Victor’s dread and guilt, using pathetic fallacy to enhance the mood.
- “*I pursued nature to her hiding-places.*”
 - **Relevance:** This phrase reflects Victor’s invasive approach to science and his disregard for natural boundaries.

The Arctic

- “*The ice cracked behind us, and was driven with force towards the north.*” (Walton)
 - **Relevance:** The Arctic symbolises both human ambition and its limitations, a metaphor for the dangers of overreaching discovery.

Conclusion

The quotations in *Frankenstein* not only reveal the complexity of its characters but also encapsulate the novel’s central themes and imagery. By understanding and analysing these key lines, readers can delve deeper into Shelley’s exploration of ambition, responsibility, and the human condition. These quotes are invaluable for appreciating the novel’s enduring relevance and its moral lessons.