

FRANKENSTEIN: MOVIE VERSION

Study Guide compares the book *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley to the movie version *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* (1994) starring Robert De Niro, Kenneth Branagh, Helena Bonham Carter, and Aidan Quinn. Directed by Kenneth Branagh. Produced by Francis Ford Coppola. A TriStar Picture.



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SAMPLE FRANKENSTEIN: MOVIE VERSION

THE MOVIE VERSION OF MARY SHELLEY'S FRANKENSTEIN IS NOT LIKE THE BOOK by Mary Shelley

RECOMMENDED MOVIE: *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* (1994) starring Robert De Niro, Kenneth Branagh, Helena Bonham Carter, and Aidan Quinn. Directed by Kenneth Branagh. Produced by Francis Ford Coppola. A TriStar Picture. The movie changes the plot in places, but this is the most reliable movie version. Robert De Niro as the 8-foot-tall creature is fantastic!

HOW ACCURATE IS THE MOVIE VERSION OF THE BOOK?

Plot: ★★☆☆☆ Characters: ★★☆☆☆ Setting: ★★★★★

Structure: ★☆☆☆☆ Symbols: ★★☆☆☆ Theme: ★★☆☆☆

WHAT'S IN THE BOOK THAT'S NOT IN THE MOVIE?

The letters to Margaret Saville, Victor's mother dying of scarlet fever, Justine's trial, Felix's sister Agatha and his girlfriend Safie, nature's power to refresh Victor, the books the creature reads, Victor's trip to England with Henry, Victor's laboratory in Scotland, Henry's murder in Ireland, the creature's repentance . . .

WHAT'S IN THE MOVIE THAT'S NOT IN THE BOOK?

Victor's mother dying in childbirth, Victor's father is a doctor, Waldman's death, use of Waldman's brain in the creature, cholera epidemic, the mob that hangs Justine, the flute, Felix's wife and children, the landlord, the good spirit of the forest, Elizabeth in Ingolstadt, the engagement locket, the murder of Victor's father, the bodyguards, the ripping out of Elizabeth's heart, use of Elizabeth's corpse to make a female creature, Victor's funeral . . .

WHAT'S THE SAME?

Robert Walton's Arctic expedition, the sighting of the creature on the ice, the rescue of Victor Frankenstein, Justine's hanging, the old blind man, how the creature learns to read and write, Victor Frankenstein's journal . . .

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THE MOVIE: SUMMARY

The following is a scene-by-scene comparison of the movie to the corresponding chapters in the book.

THE MOVIE: LETTERS TO MRS. SAVILLE, ENGLAND

In the book Robert Walton writes four letters to his sister, Margaret Saville, in London. The letters explain how Walton meets Victor Frankenstein and hears his story. The movie contains the following information from the letters.

Letter 1 – Sentences appear on the screen saying that Robert Walton is an English explorer trying to find the Northwest Passage.

Letter 2 – OMISSION: In the book this letter is written from Archangel, Russia. Walton has hired a ship and crew. He writes to his sister that he is lonely and wishes he had someone to talk to.

Letter 3 – OMISSION: This letter says that the expedition is underway. Walton and his crew are in high spirits as they head for the North Pole.

Letter 4 – OPENING SCENE: Walton’s ship is battered by a powerful storm. (**ERROR:** *In the book they encounter fog, not rain*) The ship hits an iceberg. (**ERROR:** *Not in the book*) The ship becomes trapped in ice. (**ACCURATE**) Sailors use axes to try to break the ship free. (**ERROR:** *Not in the book*) The leader of the crew threatens Walton with mutiny if the ship does not turn back. (**ACCURATE**) Walton tells him that when the ice melts, the expedition will continue north. (**ACCURATE**)

Suddenly some sled dogs on the ship sense someone or something on the ice and begin to growl. (**ERROR:** *None of this scene is in the book. There are no dogs on board the ship*) The sailors grab their rifles and prepare to shoot. (**ERROR:** *Not in the book*) A man walks across the ice to the ship and tells the armed sailors to follow him back out onto the ice floe. (**ERROR:** *Not in the book*) The dogs break loose and run out on the ice. (**ERROR:** *None of this scene is in the book*) One by one the dogs are brutally killed by something or someone out there on the ice floe. A bloody hand appears on the edge of the ice. Walton asks the stranger what’s out there. The stranger introduces himself as Victor Frankenstein. (**ERROR:** *None of this scene is in the book. In the book an exhausted and ill Victor Frankenstein is rescued by the sailors from an ice floe floating near the ship. Shortly before the rescue, the sailors see a giant man on a dog sled racing across the ice*)

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