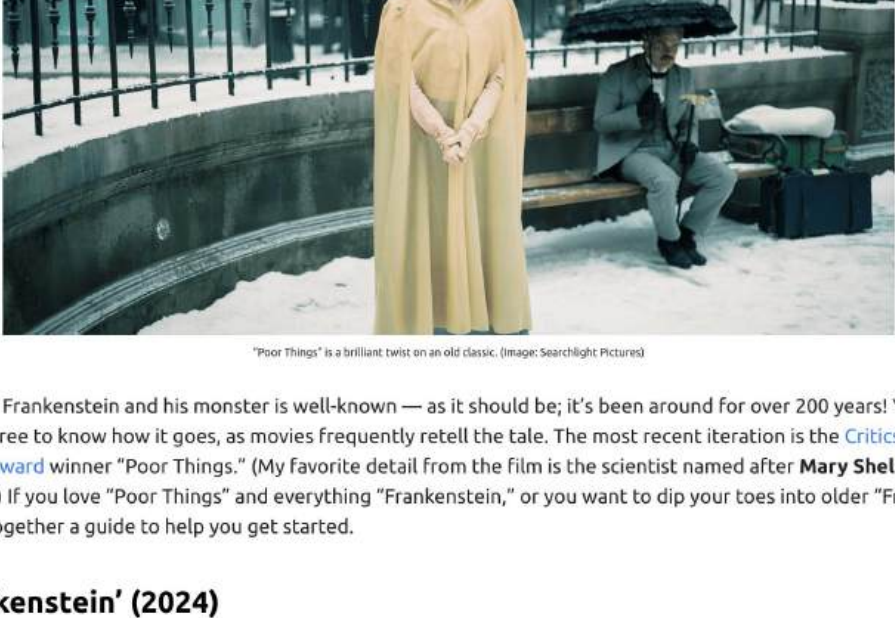


# Beginner's Guide to 'Frankenstein' Movies if You Loved 'Poor Things'

So many iterations of the classic, but the original is the best.

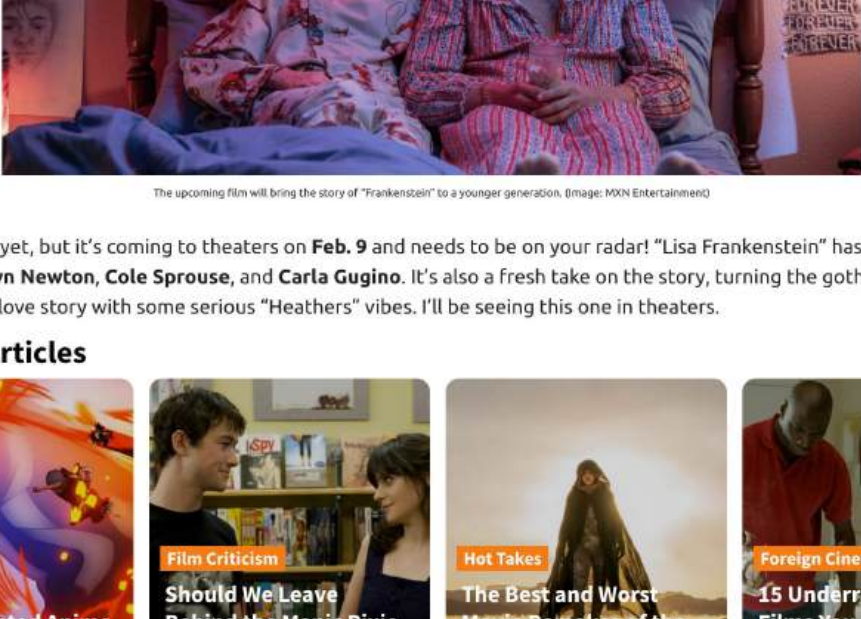
By Rebecca Carlyle | Last modified: April 2, 2024



"Poor Things" is a brilliant twist on an old classic. (Image: Searchlight Pictures)

The story of Dr. Frankenstein and his monster is well-known — as it should be; it's been around for over 200 years! You don't need a literature degree to know how it goes, as movies frequently retell the tale. The most recent iteration is the [Critics' Choice](#) and [Golden Globe Award](#) winner "Poor Things." (My favorite detail from the film is the scientist named after [Mary Shelley's](#) father, Dr. Godwin Baxter.) If you love "Poor Things" and everything "Frankenstein," or you want to dip your toes into older "Frankenstein" films, I've put together a guide to help you get started.

## 'Lisa Frankenstein' (2024)



The upcoming film will bring the story of "Frankenstein" to a younger generation. (Image: MGM Entertainment)

This one isn't out yet, but it's coming to theaters on **Feb. 9** and needs to be on your radar! "Lisa Frankenstein" has a killer cast with actors like [Kathryn Newton](#), [Cole Sprouse](#), and [Carla Gugino](#). It's also a fresh take on the story, turning the gothic horror into an '80s-era comedic love story with some serious "Heathers" vibes. It'll be seeing this one in theaters.

### Featured Articles



## 'Mary Shelley' (2017)

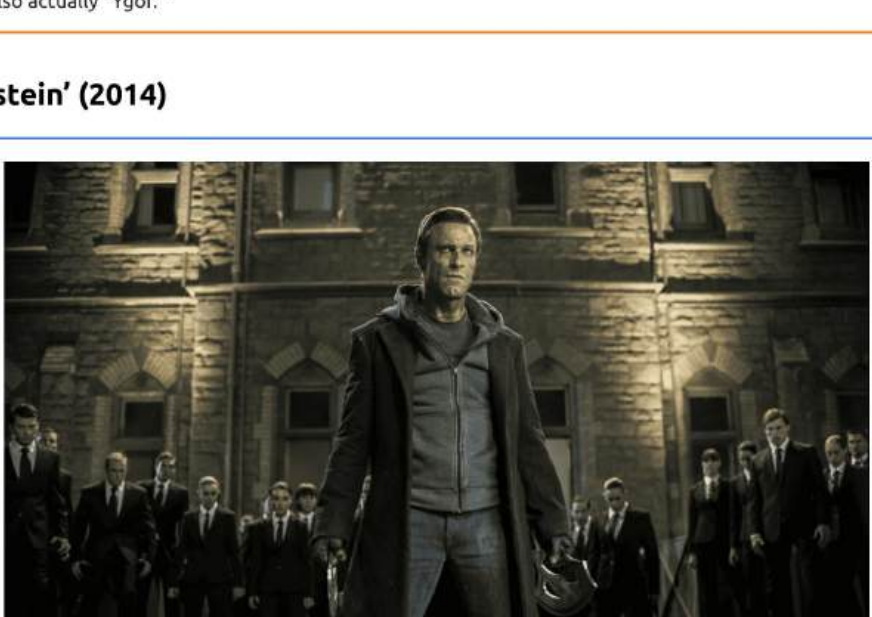


Although the novel is a work of fiction, it's heavily influenced by Mary Shelley's life. (Image: British Film Institute)

Since Frankenstein's monster has become mainstream, it's only natural that Mary Shelley's life got turned into a movie. Director [Haifaa al-Mansour](#) took a few liberties with the details in the making of the film, but the trajectory of Mary's life, her chosen mates ([Percy Shelley](#) and [Samuel Coleridge](#)), and her obsession with raising the dead inspiring her novel are all true. As an English major, I really enjoyed "Mary Shelley." Plus, [Elle Fanning](#) gives the performance of her life by truly embodying Mary Shelley.

"Mary Shelley" is available to [stream on Pluto TV](#).

## 'Victor Frankenstein' (2015)



Igor (Daniel Radcliffe) is the main character in this version. (Image: TSC Entertainment)

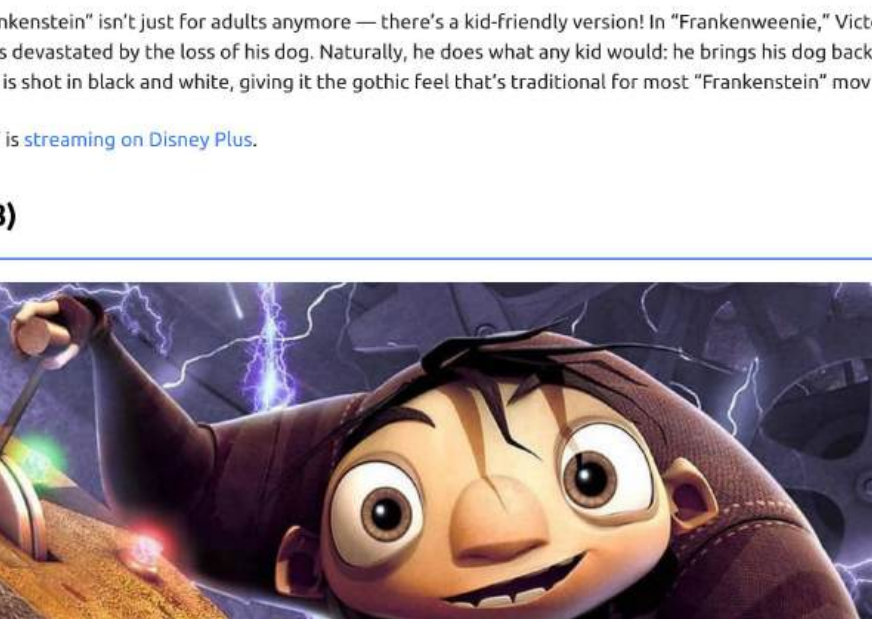
"Victor Frankenstein" is another fun version of the classic story. Told from the perspective of Igor ([Daniel Radcliffe](#)), it follows his friendship with a young medical student, Victor Frankenstein ([James McAvoy](#)). I appreciate the slow build of Victor's descent into madness that drives his ambition to play God. Naturally, it's a fun watch — just keep in mind it's not the same story. There are several notable changes in this retelling, including the absence of Victor's betrothed, the story taking place in a city rather than in a remote countryside, and the focus on Igor's origin story.

"Victor Frankenstein" is available for rent or purchase on [Amazon Prime Video](#).



**Movie Insider:** Igor isn't a character in the Mary Shelley novel. The character was first introduced in the second and third "Frankenstein" movies by Universal Pictures in the 1930s. The name's original spelling was also actually "Ygor."

## 'I, Frankenstein' (2014)

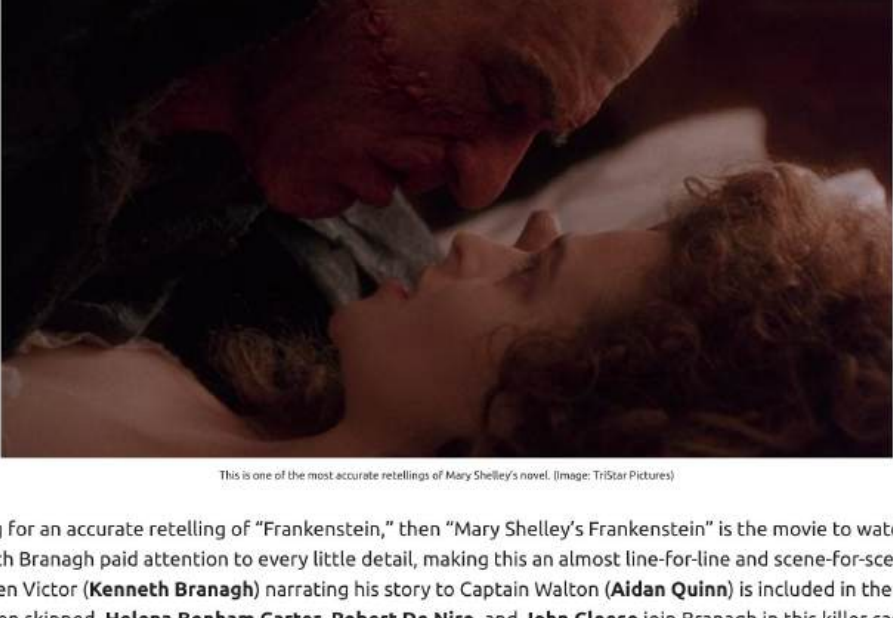


This film explores what happens to Frankenstein's monster after Dr. Frankenstein's death. (Image: Regency Features)

This version occurs 200 years after Dr. Frankenstein dies. His monster, Adam ([Aaron Eckhart](#)), lives in isolation. He returns to society to discover it has advanced significantly and is under a great threat. Adam finds himself embroiled in the middle of a centuries-long war between gargoyles and demons (yes, you read that right). "I, Frankenstein" clearly takes a few liberties, but Adam pondering his life's purpose resonates with the original novel.

With lots of action, explosions, and [Bill Nighy](#) leading the demons, "I, Frankenstein" is worth a [watch on Hulu Premium](#).

## 'Frankenweenie' (2012)

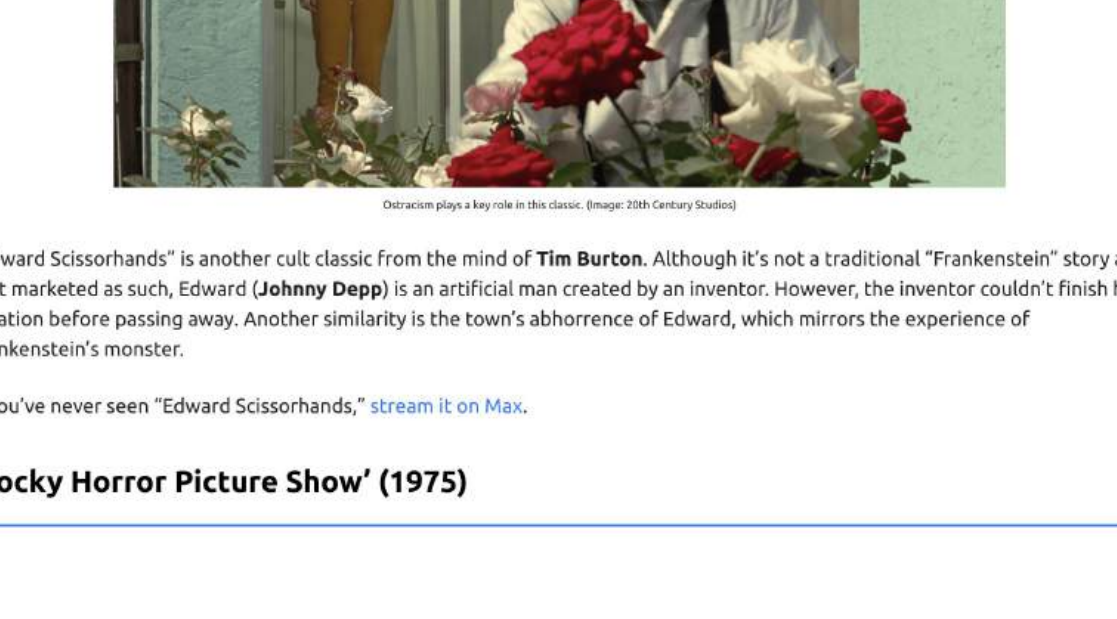


Its full-length feature film is based on a short that Tim Burton previously produced. (Image: Tim Burton Productions)

The story of "Frankenstein" isn't just for adults anymore — there's a kid-friendly version! In "Frankenweenie," Victor Frankenstein ([Charlie Tahan](#)) is devastated by the loss of his dog. Naturally, he does what any kid would: he brings his dog back to life. This stop-motion film is shot in black and white, giving it the gothic feel that's traditional for most "Frankenstein" movies.

"Frankenweenie" is [streaming on Disney Plus](#).

## 'Igor' (2008)



The sidekick has ambitions of his own. (Image: Metro Goldwyn-Mayer)

"Igor" is another family-friendly movie that I would definitely share with my kids. Think "Despicable Me" meets "Frankenstein." Igor ([John Cusack](#)) may be an evil scientist's assistant, but he has ambitions of becoming a mad scientist himself. He even dreams of winning the annual Evil Science Fair, much to the evil community's chagrin.

Share "Igor" with your family, [available for streaming on Netflix](#).

## 'Mary Shelley's Frankenstein' (1994)

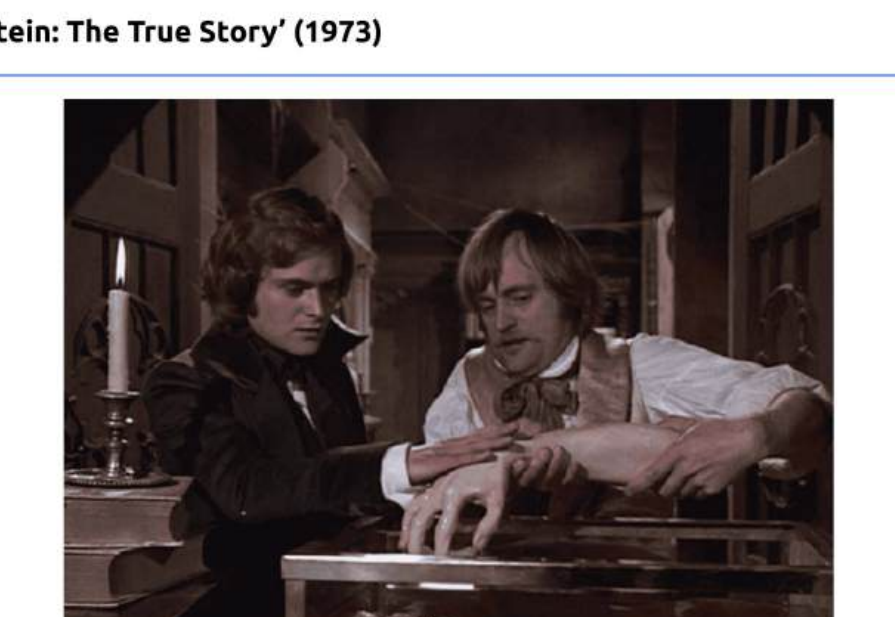


This is one of the most accurate retellings of Mary Shelley's novel. (Image: T1Star Pictures)

If you're looking for an accurate retelling of "Frankenstein," then "Mary Shelley's Frankenstein" is the movie to watch. As a director, Kenneth Branagh paid attention to every little detail, making this an almost line-for-line and scene-for-scene adaptation of the novel. Even Victor ([Kenneth Branagh](#)) narrating his story to Captain Walton ([Aidan Quinn](#)) is included in the storyline — this detail is often skipped. [Helena Bonham Carter](#), [Robert De Niro](#), and [John Cleese](#) join Branagh in this killer cast. If anything, this one is worth watching merely to see these incredible actors in their youth.

"Mary Shelley's Frankenstein" is available for [rent or purchase on Amazon Prime Video](#).

## 'Edward Scissorhands' (1990)

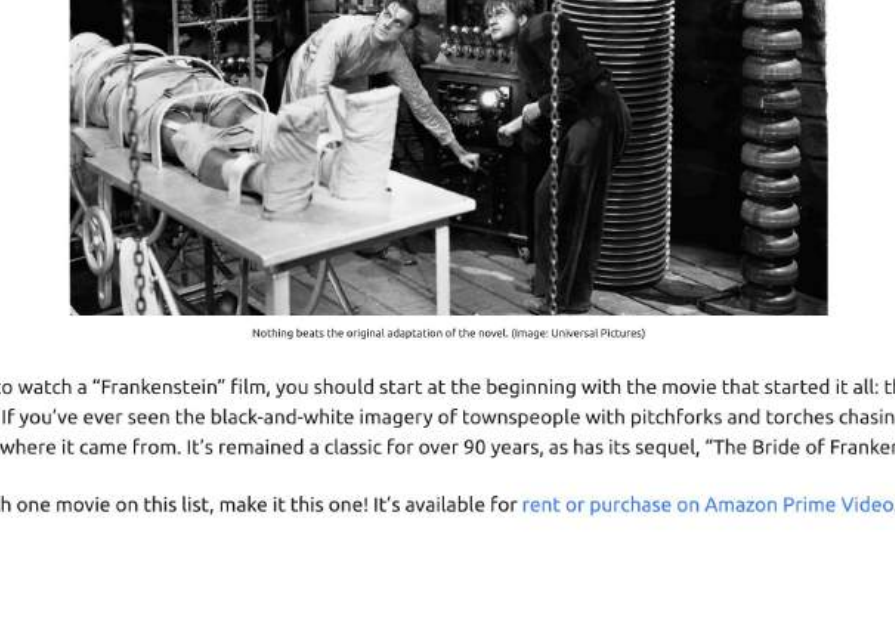


Director plays a key role in this classic. (Image: 20th Century Studios)

"Edward Scissorhands" is another cult classic from the mind of [Tim Burton](#). Although it's not a traditional "Frankenstein" story and isn't marketed as such, Edward ([Johnny Depp](#)) is an artificial man created by an inventor. However, the inventor couldn't finish his creation before passing away. Another similarity, like Victor's abhorrence of Edward, which mirrors the experience of Frankenstein's monster.

If you've never seen "Edward Scissorhands," [stream it on Max](#).

## 'Rocky Horror Picture Show' (1975)

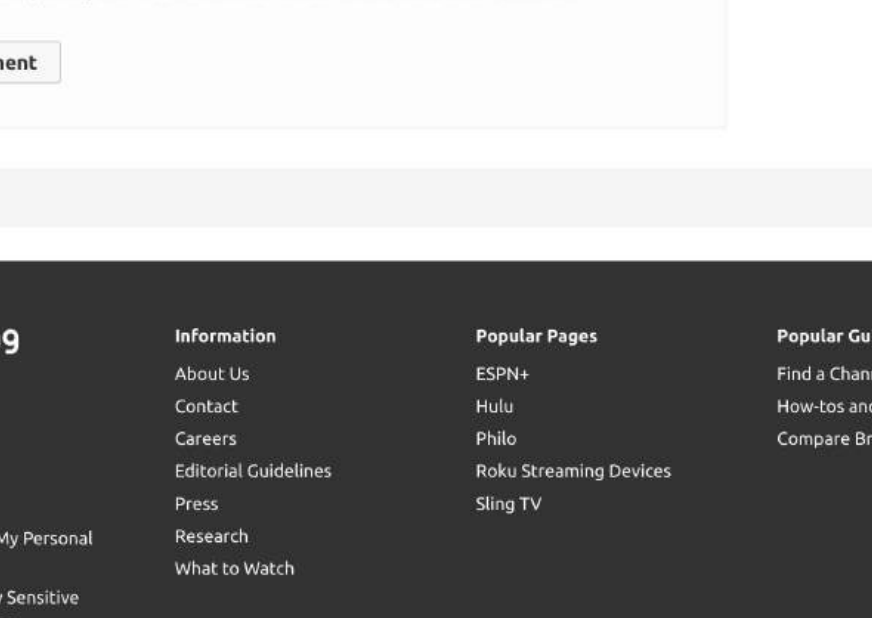


This take on "Frankenstein" is truly wild, with campy turns to boot. (Image: 20th Century Studios)

The "Rocky Horror Picture Show" has been around for almost 50 years. Although the initial reception wasn't good, it's now a famed film that has audience participation at midnight showings. I remember my first time dressing up for a midnight show and nervously watching as my friends yelled out all the participation lines. [Tim Curry](#) plays Dr. Frank-N-Furter, a mad scientist who creates the perfect artificial man, Rocky ([Peter Hinwood](#)).

Although I highly recommend seeing this at a live show, "Rocky Horror Picture Show" is available for [rent or purchase on Amazon Prime Video](#) if there aren't any showings near you.

## 'Young Frankenstein' (1974)



"Young Frankenstein" is a comedic masterpiece. (Image: Columbia Pictures)

I would suggest "Young Frankenstein" to anyone who already has knowledge of the original story and wants a fun spoof. This movie is an absolute masterpiece, with performances by [Gene Wilder](#), [Peter Boyle](#), and [Marty Feldman](#) combined with the directing genius of [Mel Brooks](#). I never thought I'd laugh out loud at a storyline that's based on a horror novel, yet the over-the-top characters, exaggerated scenes, and minutiae details — like Victor being unsure of which brain he put into his creature — made it impossible not to.

Unfortunately, this film isn't available to stream anywhere, but that doesn't mean it won't be at some point!



**Movie Insider:** Brooks rented the original laboratory equipment designed by Ken Strickfaden for the Universal "Frankenstein" films for this fun spoof and gave him screen credit, which Strickfaden didn't have in the originals.

## 'Frankenstein: The True Story' (1973)

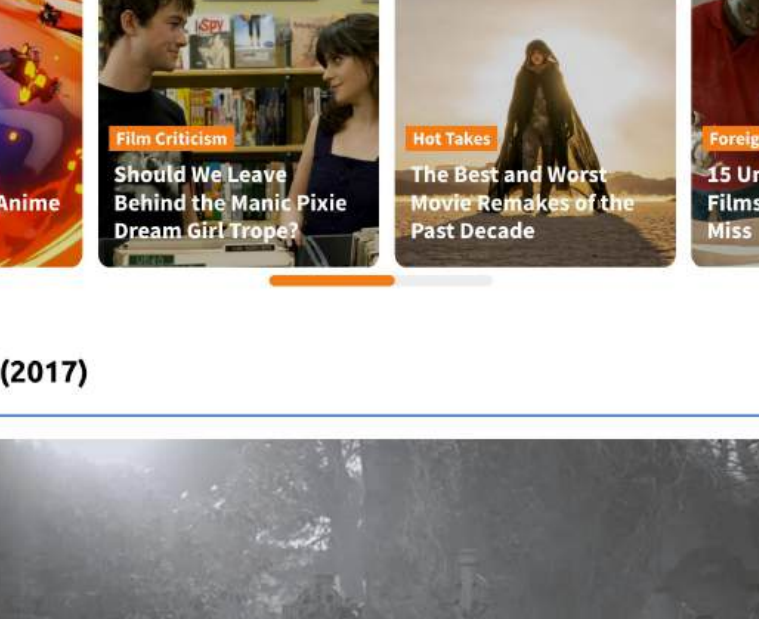


This retelling of "Frankenstein" focuses on the element of revenge. (Image: Universal Television)

"Frankenstein: The True Story" is a made-for-TV movie. It isn't a true-to-the-details account of the novel, but it does a good job of weaving in Mary Shelley's philosophy of dualism and materialism. Real people from Shelley's life inspire additional characters in the film. Dr. Polidori was an acquaintance of Shelley's through [Lord Byron](#); he was even called "Polly Dolly," just as Clerval ([David McCallum](#)) calls him in the movie.

Make sure you have an afternoon free if you decide to watch this version ([available on Prime Video via Freetee](#)), as even by today's standards, it's long — three hours and five minutes, to be exact.

## 'Frankenstein' (1931)



Nothing beats the original adaptation of the novel. (Image: Universal Pictures)

If you're going to watch a "Frankenstein" film, you should start at the beginning with the movie that started it all: the original 1931 "Frankenstein." If you've ever seen the black-and-white imagery of townspeople with pitchforks and torches chasing after a monster, this is where it came from. It's remained a classic for over 90 years, as has its sequel, "The Bride of Frankenstein."

If you only watch one movie on this list, make it this one! It's available for [rent or purchase on Amazon Prime Video](#).

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