

Principles of Literary Study  
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Office hours: Mondays 2:00–3:00 or by appointment

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## review: embedded narratives

- ▶ CN1 [Walton] CN2 [Frankenstein] ...
  - ▶ comparison (how does Walton show us what matters?)
  - ▶ anticipation of themes (rough nature; human ties)
- ▶ invites reflection on CN2 as character in N1
- ▶ reliability
  - ▶ *fabula* events are not in doubt here

## more frame effects

The tortures of the accused [Justine] did not equal mine; she was sustained by innocence, but the fangs of remorse tore my bosom, and would not forego their hold. (59)

## character

“God knows,” she said, “how entirely I am innocent. But I do not pretend that my protestations should acquit me: I rest my innocence on a plain and simple explanation of the facts which have been adduced against me; and I hope the character I have always borne will incline my judges to a favourable interpretation.” (57)

A character is the effect that occurs when a figure is presented with distinctive, mostly human characteristics.

Mieke Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, 4th ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 104.

“I now hasten to the more moving part of the my story.” (83)

## Mont Blanc chats

It is a scene terrifically desolate. In a thousand spots the trances of the winter avalanche may be perceived, where trees lie broken and strewed on the ground. (68)

Yet not a city, but a flood of ruin  
Is there, that from the boundaries of the sky  
Rolls its perpetual stream; vast pines are strewing  
Its destined path, or in the mangled soil  
Branchless and shattered stand (“Mont Blanc,” 107–11)

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And what were thou [Mont Blanc], and earth, and stars, and sea,  
If to the human mind's imaginings  
Silence and solitude were vacancy? (142–44)

## embedding challenge!

- ▶ What is the embedding formula for the story of Safie and Felix?  
(88ff.)

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CN1 [Walton] CN2 [Frankenstein] CN3 [Creature] EN4 [Creature]

### Discussion

- ▶ What is this embedded tale doing here?

## good textbooks are valuable

“The book from which Felix instructed Safie was Volney’s *Ruins of Empires*...I heard of the slothful Asiatics; of the stupendous genius and mental activity of the Grecians; of the wars and wonderful virtue of the early Romans—of their subsequent degeneration—of the decline of that mighty empire; of chivalry, christianity, and kings. I heard of the discovery of the American hemisphere, and wept with Safie over the hapless fate of its original inhabitants.” (86)

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- ▶ What does the Creature’s education imply about the things he learns about?

## intertextuality

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“I often referred the several situations [in *Paradise Lost*], as their similarity struck me, to my own. Like Adam, I was created apparently united by no link to any other being in existence.... Many times I considered Satan as the fitter emblem of my condition.” (94)

next

- ▶ finish the novel