

By the end of studying **Letter 4** I need to know:

**Plot:** Robert Walton is writing his 4th letter to his sister, Margaret Savile. Their ship has crashed into an iceberg. Here he came into contact with Victor Frankenstein

**Ideas:** Robert Walton is shows arrogance as he deliberately shuts Victor away to avoid anyone from communicating with him. Victor begins to tell his narrative.

<b>Vocabulary</b>	Vessel Capitulated Ardent Tyranny Apparition
<b>Context (To inform interpretation)</b>	Biblical allusions - hoping the quest for knowledge isn't a serpent to sting (him). Links to Romantic vs Enlightenment  The Rime of the ancient mariner: Compare the sailor who has returned from a long voyage.  The overwhelming power of nature.
<b>Themes</b>	<b>Admiration</b> = Walton has a strong admiration for Victor and sees him a figure of inspiration. He is in awe of his  <b>Ambition and Obsession</b> = Walton's ambition drives him forwards, to the point of foolish arrogance. His sentences become longer and more descriptive when he talks about the North Pole- a place he has never been.  <b>Arrogance</b> - Walton is from a higher class. He sees himself as superior to others.
<b>Deeper understanding</b>	<b>The power of nature</b> - Shelley offers the first example of the overwhelming power of nature in this chapter (a key Romantic idea)> Despite Walton's previous expectations of 'sailing over a calm sea' he has become a victim of the power that nature has over him. Ultimately, it is now nature itself that will decide whether the ship gets destroyed.  <b>Walton's arrogance</b> -Upon the appearance of Victor, Walton's demeanour changes. He, at once, sees Victor as a friend- noting his foreign accent and clear level of intellect, he shuts Victor away in his cabin and refuses to permit entrance to any of the sailors. His decision to separate Victor from the sailors further stems from his prejudice- he doesn't believe the other sailors worthy of speaking to Victor, on account of their level of education/ social class.  <b>Victor's regret of Enlightenment thought'</b> - When Victor hear Walton's plans regarding his voyage to the North Pole, he questions whether Walton has 'drunk the intoxicating draught' and how, upon hearing his tale, he will 'dash the cup from his lips'. Here, Victor sees his role as telling his story as a warning to Walton against a wholehearted pursuit of knowledge. The 'intoxicating' nature of this reflects how Victor himself was overcome by his ambitions. The promise that he will dash the cup from his lips further reinforces his belief that Walton will abandon his pursuits upon hearing the story. It is interesting to note here how Victor changes this perspective following his story. Further to this, Victor reflects how Walton 'seek[s] for knowledge and wisdom' as he once did and that he 'ardently hopes the gratification of [his] desire is not a serpent to sting [him]'. Victor alludes to Genesis- the story of The Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve eat from the Tree of Knowledge, just as Victor metaphorically has. This reflects two ideas of Victor- one the potentially destructive nature of the ambition of knowledge; two- Victor's attempts to return to religion, something he has previously rejected. This becomes a common idea towards the end of the novel.  <b>The Rime of the Ancient Mariner</b> - Victor appears to adopt the role of the mariner from the poem, with the creature adopting the role of the albatross. Both albatross and creature appear when the ship is caught in ice, with the breakup of the ice occurring after each one's respective appearance. Victor adopts the role of the mariner through his warning- whilst the mariner spends his life warning people against taking the life of one of God's creatures, Victor is warning about the perils of creating one of God's creatures.

**Reading:**

Robert Walton- travelling to the North Pole.

Margaret Savile- Robert Walton's sister.

Read to the punctuation.

Victor Frankenstein is introduced as he begins to tell Walton his narrative.

**Links across the text:**

**Victor is introduced as kind and gentle, yet we later learn that he is not.**

Victor's attempts to return to religious teachings are further reinforced in Chapter 24- as he attempts to return to religion as a way of being able to see his family again in Heaven,

<p><b>Quotes and references</b></p>	<p><b>"gigantic stature"</b> - initially fearful of what they had encountered. Later realises it is Victor and feels bad about judging him. This also reflects Victor's desire to not only challenge God, but also exceed him- he chooses to create a being larger than man (at 8 foot). This becomes a further show of Victor's arrogance.</p> <p><b>"I never saw a more interesting creature: his eyes generally an expression of wildness, and even madness"</b></p> <p><b>"I had trouble to keep off the men, who wished to ask him a thousand questions"</b></p> <p><b>"I begin to love him as a brother"</b></p> <p><b>"He is so gentle, yet so wise; his mind is so cultivated."</b> Here, Robert Walton is introducing Victor Frankenstein. He is describing Victor as a kind, cultured and highly educated scientist. He praises Victor's eloquent communication. - Triadic. It's worth contrasting this with Walton's lamentations in letter 2 that he has no friends near him of 'capacious mind'/'</p> <p><b>"One man's life or death were but a small price to pay for the acquirement of knowledge"</b> - Here, Walton in explaining to his sister how important ambitions are and the thirst for knowledge. He begins to tell the tale of Victor Frankenstein by signifying that his life was not wasted as he had devoted it to science. This foreshadows preceding events.</p> <p><b>"You seek knowledge for wisdom as I once did; and I ardent hope that the gratification of your wishes may not be a serpent to sting you"</b></p> <p><b>"appeared to despise himself for being a slave to passion."</b></p> <p><b>"desire of finding a friend, of my thirst for a more intimate sympathy with a fellow mind"</b></p>
<p><b>Terminology</b></p>	<p>Metaphors</p> <p>Triadic</p> <p>Declaratives- Use of declaratives when describing Victor- 'I never saw a more interesting creature' reflect Walton's admiration.</p>