



Mary Shelley

Miranda Seymour

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A New York Times Notable Book of the Year and a Washington Post Best Book of 2001, Mary Shelley has been called "a harrowing life, wonderfully retold" (The Washington Post). This "splendid biography" (The New Yorker) gracefully moves through the dramatic life of the woman behind history's most legendary monster. A daughter of Mary Wollstonecraft, author of the daring *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, and the radical philosopher William Godwin, Mary Shelley grew up amid the literary and political avant-garde of early-nineteenth-century London. She escaped to Europe at seventeen with the married poet Percy Bysshe Shelley, causing a great scandal. On a famous night of eerie thunderstorms, in a villa near Lord Byron's on Lake Geneva, they told ghost stories and tales of horror, giving birth to the idea of Frankenstein, a monster who has haunted imaginations for nearly two hundred years. The Mary we meet here, brilliantly brought to life by Seymour from previously unexplored sources, is brave, generous, and impetuous. Struck by tragedy, she lost three of her four children, and when she was only twenty-four, Shelley drowned off the coast of Italy. As Henry Carrigan of Library Journal said, this is "one of the finest and most significant literary biographies of recent years." "Miranda Seymour's biography of Mary Shelley provides a thoughtfully considered, lifelike portrait of a complex, often misunderstood character." -- Merle Rubin, Los Angeles Times "[Miranda Seymour] has vivid narrative gifts and a perceptive understanding of the main personalities." -- Claude Rawson, The New York Times Book Review "Mary Shelley is the most dazzling biography of a female writer to have come my way for a decade." -- Jackie Wullschlager, Financial Times

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