

Narrative poetry is poetry that tells a story. Like a short story, it has a plot, characters, a setting, and a theme. However, it is written in verse, with a **rhythm**, and **sometimes a rhyme scheme**. Just as stories are broken up into paragraphs, poems are divided up into **stanzas**. Often, each stanza has the same number of lines and the same rhyme pattern. The following example of narrative poetry has no rhyme, but the author does use other poetic literary elements. Can you identify them?

Frankenstein
by
Edward Field

The monster has escaped from the dungeon
where he was kept by the Baron,
who made him with knobs sticking out from each side of his neck
where the head was attached to the body
and stitching all over
where parts of cadavers were sewed together.

He is pursued by the ignorant villagers, □
who think he is evil and dangerous because he is ugly
□and makes ugly noises.
□They wave firebrands at him and cudgels and rakes,
□but he escapes and comes to the thatched cottage□
of an old blind man playing on the violin Mendelssohn's "Spring Song."

Hearing him approach, the blind man welcomes him:
□"Come in, my friend," and takes him by the arm. □
"You must be weary," and sits him down inside the house. □
For the blind man has long dreamed of having a friend
□to share his lonely life.

The monster has never known kindness < the Baron was cruel –
□but somehow he is able to accept it now, □
and he really has no instincts to harm the old man,
□for in spite of his awful looks he has a tender heart: □
Who knows what cadaver that part of him came from?

The old man seats him at table, offers him bread, □
and says, "Eat, my friend." The monster

rears back roaring in terror.

"No, my friend, it is good. Eat -- goood" □

and the old man shows him how to eat,

and reassured, the monster eats and says, "Eat -- goood," □

trying out the words and finding them good too.

The old man offers him a glass of wine, □

"Drink, my friend. Drink -- goood." □

The monster drinks, slurping horribly, and says,

"Drink -- goood," in his deep nutty voice □

and smiles maybe for the first time in his life.

Then the blind man puts a cigar in the monster's mouth

and lights a large wooden match that flares up in his face. □

The monster, remembering the torches of the villagers, □

recoils, grunting in terror.

"No, my friend, smoke -- goood,"

and the old man demonstrates with his own cigar. □

The monster takes a tentative puff

and smiles hugely, saying, "Smoke -- goood,"

and sits back like a banker, grunting and puffing.

Now the old man plays Mendelssohn's "Spring Song" on the violin □

while tears come into our dear monster's eyes □

as he thinks of the stones of the mob the pleasures of meal-time, □

the magic new words he has learned

and above all of the friend he has found.

It is just as well that he is unaware –

being simple enough to believe only in the present -- □

that the mob will find him and pursue him

for the rest of his short unnatural life, □

until trapped at the whirlpool's edge □

he plunges to his death.

Assignment: After completing the Elements of Science Fiction chart, write a constructed response to the prompt: How does this poem fit into the genre of science fiction? Discuss the author's message. What does this narrative poem teach us about the nature of humans?