

## Words from the Author

Rex, Adam. *Frankenstein Takes the Cake*. New York: Harcourt Children's Books, 2009.

### Adam Rex

I think there's an artificial barrier that's thrown up between poetry and prose. To me, the former is something like writing with an ear for rhythm, an exactness of word choice, and a flair for allusion and metaphor—all of which is also present in the sort of prose I tend to like best. In my mind the real dividing line is rhyme, and I suppose that's why I'm not known for my non-rhyming poetry.

I'm fascinated by the idea that rhyme may have evolved as a mnemonic device—as a way for storytellers to remember the complexity of epic stories. Rhyme still seizes hold of the listener in this way—it says, “Attention must be paid. This is important.” Even if it's a suite of poems about Frankenstein getting married.

If, decades from now, a man curses my name because he can't remember his anniversary but he can't forget the opening lines of “The Best Man of Frankenstein Makes a Trip to the Buffet”, I'll have done my job. You're welcome, future-man.

I've been asked to describe any research I may have done for my book *Frankenstein Takes the Cake*, or its companion book, *Frankenstein Makes a Sandwich*. I would genuinely like to claim that I read all of the classic Victorian and Regency horror stories in preparation, or that I watched the Universal monster movies, or familiarized myself with scholarly theory regarding the monster's place in contemporary—No, you know what? I wouldn't like to claim that. That would be ridiculous. All that has nothing to do with the sorts of books I was writing.

I *have* seen all of the old movies. And I have by now read most or all of the classic horror stories, though I've read many of them only very recently, and with the point of view that I had a debt to pay. I've squeezed a lot from the distillation of such characters as the Invisible Man, Mr. Hyde, Dracula, and Frankenstein, so I felt a pleasant obligation to read the original stories. (In my reading it's been entertaining to find parallels I didn't even know were there—an incident in *The Invisible Man*, for example, nearly identical to my line, “Said Griffin, ‘Oh my! That's your thumb in my eye!’” albeit without the rhyme.)

Anyway, I wasn't writing about the original characters, or even about the Universal movie characters, though I'll admit possibly a greater influence exerted by the latter than the former. What I was really writing about were pop-culture, common knowledge, Halloween decoration versions of these classic monsters, and I didn't want my audience to need any esoteric knowledge of old novels or film trivia in order to enjoy my little stories.

Of course, something like a dozen people have approached me since the publication of *Frankenstein Makes a Sandwich* in order to “correct” me on a specific point—“Frankenstein” is the name of the doctor, not the monster. I know this. Everyone knows this. But, then, I was never writing about Frankenstein’s monster, the tortured satanic figure of Shelley’s Regency horror novel; I was writing about Frankenstein, the dim-witted nine-foot-tall green monster. He’s a character, too.

So all of this is to excuse why I didn’t do any research. It wasn’t laziness, it was integrity or something.

You know, now that I think about it, I did do a little reading into haiku. There! Research! I read about what constitutes a traditional haiku and tried to make my own from the section “Kaiju Haiku” (Kaiju being Japanese for “strange beast”) as genuine as possible.

Anyway, thanks for letting me prattle on like this. Hope you like the book.

### About the Author

**Adam Rex** grew up in Phoenix, Arizona, the middle of three children. He was neither the smart one (older brother) or the cute one (younger sister), but he was the one who could draw. He now lives in Tucson with his physicist wife Marie (who is both the smart and cute one).

His picture book *Frankenstein Makes a Sandwich*, a collection of stories about monsters and their problems, was a New York Times Bestseller. 2007 saw the release of his first novel, *The True Meaning of Smekday*.

Garlic and crosses are useless against Adam. Sunlight has been shown to be at least moderately effective. A silver bullet does the trick. Pretty much any bullet, really.

Please visit <http://www.adamrex.com/aboutcontactadam.html> for more information about Adam Rex.