Poetics peculiarity of mary shelley’s ‘tales and stories’

Mary Shelley has been remembered chiefly as the author of *Frankenstein* and the wife of Percy Bysshe Shelley. In his short introduction and notes, Charles E. Robinson provides a critical appreciation and elucidation of the tales. Most of Mary Shelley’s short narratives were first published in *The Keepsake*, the most enduring (1828 – 57) and popular of the nineteenth-century annual gift books. *The Keepsake* published the most celebrated writers of the age, among them Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, Scott, Dickens, Tennyson. The tales abound in highly dramatic situations. A bastard brother usurps the place of a nobleman, condemning the legitimate brother to the galleys. To avoid being shot, a girl changes clothes with her sister, a nun, and inherits with the nun’s habit a lifetime of seclusion behind convent walls. In order to dream about the future, a heroine dares to sleep on the St. Catherine’s couch, a narrow ledge of rock hanging precipitously over the raging winter torrent of the Loire. Levers wend their star-crossed way to blissful union or eternal despair. Brigands, pirates, smugglers, distressed damsels, darkly ambitious villains, and knights *sans peur et sans reproche* crowd thickly over the pages. Yet Mary Shelley’s intense and incandescent writing easily persuades the reader to a willing suspension of disbelief. Many of the tales have overtones of science fiction. A seventeenth-century Englishman, Mr. Dodsworth, buried in a glacier, is reanimated more than a century later to confront a vastly changed world. A man in whom the aging process has been suspended by alchemy encounters, is not an immortal bliss, but he has to suffer all the torments of living with a wife who ages into a querulous, jealous old woman while he remains young and handsome. Perhaps the most gripping account of transformation occurs when a rash young man trades bodies with a misshapen dwarf. His sense of horror as he perceives his new, grotesque shadow with its long spidery arms is chillingly conveyed. Springing from the cultural matrix of English Romanticism the tales reveal the new sensibility of the age – the overflowing emotion, the enthrallment with legend and romance.
Mary Shelley was a famous woman writer of the early 19th century. She is famous for her novel Frankenstein. Mary Shelley was born on 30 August 1797 in Somerstown in London. Her father was William Godwin and her mother was the famous writer Mary Wollstonecraft. Unfortunately her mother died 11 days after Mary was born. Mary spent some time at a dame school. However Mary was mainly educated at home. She was a highly intelligent woman and she studied history, literature and the Bible. Mary learned Latin, French and Italian and Greek. In 1812 Mary met Percy Bysshe Shelley for the first time. In 1816 Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley met the young poet Percy Bysshe Shelley in 1812 and eloped with him to France in July 1814. The couple were married in 1816. Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's father was William Godwin, a noted social philosopher, political journalist, and religious Dissenter, and her mother was Mary Wollstonecraft, a writer and passionate advocate of educational and social equality for women. When was Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley married? Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (née Godwin) met the young poet Percy Bysshe Shelley in 1812 and ran off with him to France in July 1814.