

## **Death and Other Old Friends: A Practice of Monster and Adaptation Theory in *Because You Love To Hate Me***

By exploring stories from our past, and oftentimes from our childhood, both the reader and the writer of those tales are able to encounter old ideas, fears, prejudices, and traumas in a new way. Monsters have long been a tool that humanity has used to try to understand these things which haunt them. Despite the current and pervasive use of the internet and the increased ability to share ideas and experiences instantaneously, there remains a need to try to understand the troubles that surround us through this more accessible lens. This need has been filled in the creation of new monsters, as well as in the revisiting of monsters from our literary past. While the birth of new monsters and the worlds that they inhabit gives insight to current cultures, it is particularly interesting to see the increased return of past monsters.

Recently, many popular YA authors published books exploring the backstories and creating reimaginings of villains, monsters, and their victims. At the same time, the BookTube community began to focus not only on the protagonists of the books they were reading, but they also started to explore the complexities of the villains, which contributed to the villains' stories and the BookTubers' personal lives. In the anthology of short stories and essays titled *Because You Love To Hate Me: 13 Tales of Villainy*, the BookTuber and writer Ameriie has brought together the two worlds of the reader and the author to explore the topic of villainy in its many forms. This paper will look briefly at the stories "Beautiful Venom," "Death Knell," "Marigold," and their accompanying essays through the lens of monster theory and adaptation theory to see how the return to old stories in this new collaborative format explores and practices these theories to show the universality of monsters across time.