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Literary Analysis Paper

Monster and Monster

Frankenstein is the story of a man whose ambition conducts him to seek for supernatural powers. In his attempt to reach a God-like level, he acts basically for his own interest and wants to see his name glorified by humanity. (ENGLISH. Jean-Philippe Pellet, May 21st, 2001)

Mary Shelley introduces Victor when he is recalling his childhood, the reader starts to get to know him as a child. Victor's child character seems to be a very intelligent; almost to the point that he has trouble relating to other children other than his adopted sister Elizabeth and good friend Henry. At the beginning as Victor recalls his childhood it is hard to see him as so, because he seems to lack the innocence and playful nature of a child. Victor was fascinated with science from a young age, and as he grew so did his fascination. He became so consumed with science that it took over his life. When most children were playing Victor was investigating. "The world was to me a secret which I desired to divine. Curiosity, earnest research to learn the hidden laws of nature, gladness akin to rapture, as they were unfolded to me, are among the earliest sensations I can remember." (Shelley, M.(1818). *Frankenstein*. ch. 2)

Victor became very educated in science and attended a very respectable college. As Victor learned more about life and science he realized he wanted to do something no other person has ever done, something that only God can do. "One of the phenomena which had peculiarly attracted my attention was the structure of the human frame, and, indeed, any animal

endued with life. Whence, I often asked myself, did the principle of life proceed? It was a bold question, and one which has ever been considered as a mystery; yet with how many things are we upon the brink of becoming acquainted, if cowardice or carelessness did not restrain our inquiries.”(ch.4) Shelley grew Victor’s character into a man whose morals are blurred by achieving greatness. He could no longer determine what was right and wrong, Victor could only think about accomplishing something no one else has ever attempted.

Victor thought that if he could create this being that he would be satisfied and happy with his great accomplishment. But after finally giving life to the creature Victor was scared and probably rightfully so; the monster was hideous and scary. “His jaws opened, and he muttered some inarticulate sounds, while a grin wrinkled his cheeks. He might have spoken, but I did not hear; one hand was stretched out, seemingly to detain me, but I escaped and rushed downstairs.”(ch.5) Victor being scared kept his creation a secret and he never tried to find the monster after that night. While walking the streets for hours in the rain to afraid to go back to his apartment in fear that the monster would be there; he ran into his good friend Henry Clerval. The two went back to the apartment and Victor was relieved that the monster had vanished, but from the eventful night Victor became very ill. Shelley set the scene as a night no one would want to endure; she made a nightmare come to life, and the nightmare was only just beginning.

Victor recovered and learned that his youngest brother William had been murdered. Victor immediately went back home to console his family and find the murderer. He had not thought about the monster in months and he was beginning to think that he could keep it a secret forever. Once home though, Victor realizes that it was the monster that had killed his beloved brother. The reader so far is lead to believe that the monster is pure evil and that it doesn’t deserve sympathy.

The story takes an unexpected turn when Justine the close friend is accused for William's death and will be killed once found guilty. Victor knows the truth but isn't willing to say anything about the monster to save Justine, so she is killed. Shelley portrays Victor adult character as a person who seldom makes the right choice, which for the reader this might be very frustrating and hard to understand because Shelley makes the reader believe Victor grew up in a home with loving and generous parents. One would think that growing up in this environment Victor was taught to make good choices. Victor had become a dark and selfish character, which is unusual for lead characters.

The first half of the book the reader has come to know Victor and can only guess about the monster. A reader up to this point might think that the monster is completely evil and agree that Victor made the right choice by abandoning him. But Shelley prevents such one-sidedness by letting the monster tell his version of the story. The monster's first-person narrative draws the reader in and one learns that the creature is not the abomination his creator claims. (The all-too-human monster: Examining sympathy for Frankenstein's creation." EssaybyExample.com)

Shelley tells the story of the monster from the time he was created, much like the way she tells Victor's story. The monster recalls on his past and how he learned about life. He also recalls about how people treated him and how he felt. He reveals that he didn't mean to kill William that it was an accident; an accident that could have been prevented if Victor would have shown him love and taught him about life. Shelley lets the reader get to know the monster as a person, one with intelligence and emotion.

The monster wants to be close to his creator, much like a son wants his father, so he finds a shelter outside of the De lacey home and lives there. Shelley shared with the reader all of the kind things that the monster does for the family in secrecy, and the reader starts to see the

monster is really only a monster by looks. He finds book to read and that is when he realizes just how heartbroken and lonely he is. "I read it, as I had read the other volumes which had fallen into my hands, as a true history. It moved every feeling of wonder and awe that the picture of an omnipotent God warring with his creatures was capable of exciting. I often referred the several situations, as their similarity struck me, to my own. Like Adam, I was apparently united by no link to any other being in existence; but his state was far different from mine in every other respect."(ch.15)

The monster eventually confronts Victor and tells him what he longs for, but Victor doesn't want anything to do with the monster. So the monster makes a deal with Victor; Victor must create a female for the monster and in return the monster will not do any harm and will leave Victor alone. Victor agrees with the monster at first and starts to create a female, but he then destroys her right as he is about to give her life. Victor has once again proven to be selfish in thinking that the monster will always be a monster and incapable of having human emotions. Victor thought that it would be a mistake to have two monsters walking this earth. The monster gets very upset and emotional, and thinks that Victor should be without love if the monster is forced by Victor to be lonely and without love. The monster murders Clerval and Elizabeth to make Victor feel the way the monster does.

Throughout the book Shelley has given readers two characters that in some way are both monsters. One character grows into a monster through losing his ability to decipher wrong from right. This character harms people through lies, selfish acts, and bad choices and therefore is a monster by choice. The other character Shelley introduces is a created a monster and had no choice. This character starts out as everything a reader would imagine a monster to be, and later grows into a person with desires and need. This character is interesting because it starts out as a

monster then learns to be loving and kind; but then all of his dreams are taken from him by the first character, and he chooses to become the monster that everyone accuses him of being. The readers know these characters as Victor and monster, but the monster isn't always the real monster.

Shelley did an excellent job of connecting the reader to these two characters. Even if the reader doesn't like one or both of the characters Shelley portrayed them in a way that a reader can relate to both of these character in some way. Leaving the reader with the question: Who is the real monster in this story?

References

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