

The history about frankenstein english literature essay

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



The story starts off with us seeing 4 letters from an English explorer Robert Walton to his sister Margaret Saville. In his letters he talks about how he is on a dangerous voyage to accomplish a great purpose and how he has no friends which could make him be called a Romantic figure. In the fourth letter, we are informed that ship is stuck in ice and the crew sees a giant figure on a dog sled. The next morning they encounter another sled beside the ship and they find a man called Victor Frankenstein who was in pursuit of the man on the first sled and desperately wants to find him, even though he is no condition to. Victor starts explaining his life to Robert from the beginning and we are introduced to how his parents met, how he was born and how he got a girl named Elizabeth as a present. We are then told how Elizabeth and Victor grow up, and he meets a boy named Henry Clerval who becomes his best friend. As Victor gets older, he starts to find an interest in natural philosophy so he starts reading ancient books by authors like Cornelius Agrippa. During a thunderstorm, Victor is amazed by the power of nature and electricity when lightning completely destroys a tree.

Characters:

Robert Walton: He is the first character introduced in the book and we start off by reading his letters. He is an English explorer on a dangerous voyage to accomplish a great purpose. He helps Victor Frankenstein get back to health and listens to his story. " When he had in some measure recovered...

attended on him as much as my duty would permit" (Shelley 10). He cared about Victor and did everything he could to get him back to health. Margaret

Saville: She is the sister of Robert Walton. " I arrived here yesterday...

increasing confidence in the success of my undertaking" (Shelley 1). She is

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the one who is receiving all the letters from Robert. Monster: We only hear of him from Victor Frankenstein and only see him from a distance. He does not look like an ordinary man. " We perceived a low carriage, fixed on a sledge and drawn by dogs.. a being which had the shape of a man, but apparently of gigantic stature, sat in the sledge and guided the dogs" (Shelley 9) Victor Frankenstein: He is found on the side of the boat almost dead. " His limbs were nearly frozen, and his body dreadfully emaciated by fatigue and suffering" (Shelley 10). He is more worried about catching the strange man he was following than his own life. He tells his life story to Robert and we learn he had an interest in natural philosophy and electricity. Alphonse Frankenstein: The father of Victor Frankenstein. He marries Caroline Beaufort and has Victor. " Two years after this event Caroline became his wife" (Shelley 18). He has always had a devotion to public duty. " He was respected by all who knew him for his integrity and indefatigable attention to public business" (Shelley 17). Caroline Beaufort: The daughter of Beaufort who was Alphonse's friend. She becomes poor but still takes care of her father. She starts to live with Alphonse once her father dies and marries him 2 years later. "... and in the tenth month her father died in her arms, leaving her an orphan and a beggar" (Shelley 18). Elizabeth Lavenza: She was adopted and picked out from a group of orphans by Caroline. She was given to Victor jokingly as a gift. " And when, on the morrow, she presented Elizabeth to me as her promised gift, I, with childish seriousness, interpreted her words literally and looked upon Elizabeth as mine--mine to protect, live, and cherish" (Shelley 20). She was his sister and they got along very well.

Style:

Simile: " He strove to shelter her, as a fair exotic is sheltered by the gardener, from every rougher wind and to surround her with all that could tend to excite pleasurable emotion in her soft and benevolent mind" (Shelley 19). This quote is comparing how Alphonse protects Caroline with a like or as. It compares it with how a fair exotic flower is protected by the gardener. This quote is showing that after what Caroline had been through, Alphonse wanted to protect and give her shelter through any means possible.

Personification: " Having conquered the violence of his feelings, he appeared to despise himself for being the slave of passion" (Shelley 13). This quote is showing that passion was given human qualities, having a slave. The significance of this quote is that Victor got overcome with emotions and started crying because of what Robert was saying. He could not control it and that's why he is called the slave of passion, since passion is an intense emotion. Metaphor: " I read and studied the wild fancies of these writers with delight; they appeared to me treasures known to few besides myself" (Shelley 25). This quote is comparing how the work of Paracelsus and Albertus Magnus was like a treasure to him. He loved natural philosophy and once he started to read the works of these ancient authors, he studied everything with delight and thinks of the books as treasure.

Themes:

Loneliness" I have no friend, Margaret; when I am glowing with the enthusiasm of success, there will be none to participate my joy; if I am assailed by disappointment, no one will endeavour to sustain me in

dejection" (Shelly 4). The theme of loneliness is shown throughout the letters when Robert Walton tells his sister that he is lonely and can't make friends with anyone around him. He is a romantic figure but he thinks he is different from everyone. Robert resorts to writing his feelings on paper but he would rather have someone who could sympathize with him. He needs a friend he can share his victories and help him with his defeats. When he finds Victor, that's the only time he properly communicate with someone to share his feelings with. Victor, a stranger, turns out to be the friend he always wanted.

"Danger of Knowledge" You seek for knowledge and wisdom, as I once did; and I ardently hope that the gratification of your wishes may not be a serpent to sting you, as mine has been" (Shelley 15). The theme of danger of knowledge is shown when Victor tells Robert that his desire for knowledge resulted in everything he loved taken away from him. Victor knows Robert also has a desire of knowledge since he is taking a trip to the north pole to find multiple new things, like a new shipping route, and how the compass works. Victor explains how knowledge is sometimes dangerous and he doesn't want Robert to have the same fate as him. Portrayal of Woman "I have a pretty present for my Victor... and looked upon Elizabeth as mine-- mine to protect, love, and cherish" (Shelley 21). Woman are being portrayed as objects, even though as a joke. Elizabeth was given to Victor as a present like she was an object even though she is an human being. Woman were treated very differently back then, than now.

Frankenstein Literary Significance Chapters 3-5

Plot:

Elizabeth gets the scarlet fever but Caroline takes care of her, unfortunately she gets it from Elizabeth and in the end dies Victor is hit hard by his mother's death but still goes off to Ingolstadt to study Upon arriving he starts to meet some professors and meets a man called M. Krempe who tells him what he has been studying is not worth anything and that he has wasted his time, he has to start again He meets another professor who convinces Victor to study science Victor starts to study vigorously and doesn't make any friend or even send letters to his family back home but he starts to advance quickly and is interested in the how stuff is alive/ the human body He soon learns a lot and now starts to study how to make dead things come back to life, he has a plan to make a creature and starts to gather the stuff he needs One night, he completes his creature and when he brings it to life, the appearance of it horrifies him and just wants to leave He starts to dream nightmares about Elizabeth and his mother and he leaves the house to sleep in the courtyard He goes for a walk the next day and doesn't want to go back home because of the monster and surprisingly finds Henry Clerval, who has come to study at Ingolstadt Victor gets sick and Henry takes care of him and gets him back to health in a couple of months, once he recovers he finds Elizabeth has sent him some letters

Characters:

Victor: He is hit hard by his mother's death. " It is so long before the... very existence appeared a part of our own can have departed forever" (Shelley

29). He still goes off to Ingolstadt to study and finds that all that he has studied so far is wrong, he has to start afresh. He is not social and is into his studies. He discovers how to create life. He makes a monster and gets ill. Elizabeth: Catches the scarlet fever and almost dies. " Elizabeth had caught the scarlet fever.. she was in the greatest danger" (Shelley 28). Luckily, she does survive and she writes letters to Victor at his university. Caroline: Dies taking care of Elizabeth as she gets the scarlet fever. " On the third day my mother sickened... her medical attendants prognosticated the worst event" (Shelley 28). One of her last wishes is for Victor and Elizabeth to get married. Henry: He finally comes to Ingolstadt and ends up nursing Victor back to health. " This was the commencement of a nervous fever which confined me for several months. During all that time Henry was my only nurse" (Shelley 47). M. Krempe: One of the professors Victor meets when he get to Ingolstadt. He is the one who tells Victor that everything he has studied so far is useless and he has to start again. Victor describes him as, " M. Krempe was a little squat man... did not prepossess me in favour of his pursuits" (Shelley 32). M. Waldman: Another professor Victor meets at Ingolstadt. Victor actually likes him and he persuades Victor to pursue his studies in science. " His person was short but remarkably erect and his voice the sweetest I had ever heard" (Shelley 32).

Style:

Imagery: " His yellow skin scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath his hair was of a lustrous black, and flowing; his teeth of a pearly whiteness; but those luxuriances only formed a more horrid contrast with his

watery eyes, that seemed almost of the same colour as the dun-white sockets in which they were set, his shrivelled complexion and straight black lips" (Shelley 43). These words help us visualize how the monster might look. Victor describes the monster as having good features but they have horrid contrast with other things, which ultimately make the monster's appearance hideous. This is one of the main reasons why Victor hates the monster.

Allusion: " On the third day my mother sickened; her fever was accompanied by the most alarming symptoms, and the looks of her medical attendants prognosticated the worst event" (Shelley 28). An allusion to the bible is made, since Jesus rose on the third day. This shows significance because we understand that Caroline is compared to Jesus because of the stuff she has done in life. She has helped other people. Foreshadowing: " Such were the professor's words-- rather let me say such the words of the fate-- enounced to destroy me" (Shelley 33). Victor foreshadows that the same words that make him interested in the sciences will be the ones that will bring the end of him. This is significant because the speech given to him motivates him to pursue the studies which result in him making the monster, he foreshadowed this.

Themes:

IsolationThe theme of isolation is shown throughout these 3 chapters because Victor has been studying and creating this monster all by himself without barely talking to anyone or telling anyone what he's up. He spent years in his apartment studying and months building the monster without telling anyone. He completely isolated himself. " The summer months passed

while I was thus engaged, heart and soul, in one pursuit" (Shelley 41). Victor had only one goal in his mind and he completely isolated himself to achieve it. The Haunted Mind/GuiltThe theme of The Haunted Mind/Guilt is shown in chapter 5 when Victor realizes what he has just created. He is horrified at what he has made and realizes he has just created a monster. " A mummy again endued with animation could not be so hideous as that wretch" (Shelley 44). He was disappointed that all his dreams had become a hell to him and he regretted making the monster. He felt guilty of what he had just created. MonstrosityThe theme of monstrosity is shown in chapter 5 when Victor realizes he has created a monster and all his dreams have gone down the drain. He tried to pick the most beautiful parts but in the end, nothing worked and the monster ended up being hideous. " I had gazed on him while unfinished; he was ugly then, but when those muscles and joints were rendered capable of motion, it became a thing such as even Dante could not have conceived" (Shelley 44). He is horrified at his creation.

Frankenstein Literary Significance Chapters 6-7

Plot:

Victor starts reading a letter from ElizabethIn the letter Elizabeth shows she is worried about Victor and his illness, and tells him that he should write to his familyElizabeth introduces Justine in this letter who has come to live with them as a servant after her mother diedOnce Victor recovers, he and Henry start to study the same thing in university, Oriental Languages, Victor gives up on everything related to science, including talking to his old professorsVictor tries to return to Geneva but the weather made his journey

postponed till the spring Victor receives a letter from his dad explaining how someone has killed William, his brother and this makes him leave for Geneva right away He arrives late and the gates of the city are already closed so he goes to where his brother was killed, there he spots his creation, the monster, and it dawns on him that it was the monster who must of killed his brother. In the morning he goes home and finds out that everyone thinks Justine committed the murder and there is proof against her proving it Victor knows that Justine did not commit the murder but does not come forward because he is afraid

Characters:

Victor: He finally recovers from his illness. He starts to study Oriental Languages with Henry instead of science. He cannot even think or talk to anyone about science since it torments him. " Ever since the fatal night... even to the name of natural philosophy" (Shelley 54). He is devastated when he learns his brother William was murdered and feels really guilty once he found out his creation was to blame. He did not want to seem like a mad man so he did not tell everyone who the real murderer was to save Justine.

Elizabeth: She acts mother-like and hides all her feelings after her aunts death. She is worried about Victor about his illness and that he never writes home. " You have been... sufficient to reassure me on your account" (Shelley 50). **Justine Moritz:** Her mother died and she ended up an orphan. She was close to the Frankenstein family, since she had lived with them before but had to leave to take care of her sick mother. She came back as a servant once her mother died. She is also wrongly accused of the murder of William

Frankenstein. " Indeed, who would credit that Justine Moritz... become capable of so frightful, so appalling a crime?" (Shelley 65). Madame Moritz: She became a widow with 4 children and treated Justine poorly and made her leave. Once she got sick, Justine was her only child left to take care of her, which she did. She dies in the end because of cold weather. " Madame Moritz, her mother, was a widow with four children, of whom Justine was the third" (Shelley 51). William Frankenstein: Victor's brother. He gets murdered as a child. He was loved by everyone. " William is dead! That sweet child, whose smiles... Victor he is murdered" (Shelley 58). Ernest Frankenstein: Another brother of Victor and also a brother of William. He wants to enter the military in a foreign country. He is only 16 at the time but full of activity and spirit, he is a true Swiss. " He is now sixteen and full of activity and spirit" (Shelley 51).

Style:

Foreshadowing: " Ever since the fatal night, the end of my labours, and the beginning of my misfortunes, I had conceived a violent antipathy even to the name of natural philosophy" (Shelley 54). Victor foreshadows the misfortunes that are about to come his way. He knows that this monster will bring bad things into his life. He foresees that he is going to have misfortunate events in his future. Simile: " I discovered more distinctly the black sides of Jura and the bright summit of Mont Blanc. I wept like a child" (Shelley 61). Victor is amazed by how beautiful the scenery is and how he forgot all about it while he was studying. He felt like he had never seen them before and this made him cry like a child. He finally realized what he had

missed from all those years he spent studying and pursuing his dream that backfired on him. Metaphor: " When you read their writings, like appears to consist in a warm sun and harden of roses, in the smiles and frowns of a fair enemy, and the first that consumes your own heart" (Shelley 56). Victor compares the oriental writings to a warm summer day. A warm summer day can help you forget your worries. In this case the writings are helping him take his mind off of science and he is actually gaining an interest in the languages.

Themes:

The Haunted Mind/Guilt" My tale was not one to announce publicly; its astounding horror would be looked upon as madness by the vulgar" (Shelley 66). The theme of the haunted mind/ guilt is shown in chapter 7 when Victor finds out that his creation, the monster was the murderer of his brother William, but instead Justine is accused of the murder. Victor knows the truth but does not come forward because he's scared that everyone will look at him as a madman. Isolation" My country, my beloved country! Who but a native can tell the delight I took in again beholding thy streams, thy mountains, and more than all, thy lovely lake" (Shelley 62). Victor was away and isolated from his home and everyone he knew for so long, that when he returned, he felt like it was the first time he was seeing everything again. His years of study isolated him completely and he barely even wrote back home. Seeing everything he loved as a child come back to him made him delightful. Secrets" You are all mistaken; I know the murderer. Justine, poor, good Justine, is innocent" (Shelley 66). Victor knew the Justine was innocent and

that his monster, that he had created, had killed William. Even though he know this, he does not come forward with the information since he is scared that everyone will label him as a madman. He keeps this big thing all to himself. He is hiding secrets.

Frankenstein Literary Significance Chapters 8-10

Plot:

Even after knowing she was innocent, Justine still confesses to killing William since the priest convinced her that confessing might rid her of this sin. Justine gets executed and Victor realizes that both William and Justine's murders are on his hands and he feels guilty because he can't come forward and tell the truth even after Justine gets executed. The whole Frankenstein family is depressed and they leave to their house in Belrive in the hope of cheering up. Victor goes to the Chamounix valley and the scenery gives him temporary happiness. The next day Victor travels to the top of Montanvert to find peace. Upon reaching the top, he sees his creation running towards him at superhuman speeds. The monster speaks to Victor in perfect English and Victor, at first wants to fight the monster but then is convinced by the monster to hear his side of the story. Victor and the monster go to a cave and the monster begins his story.

Characters:

Victor: He is depressed that both William and Justine's deaths are on his hands. He knew Justine was innocent but he did not do anything to help her. He actually tries to commit suicide but the thought of Elizabeth and his dad stop him. " But I was restrained, when I thought of the heroic and suffering

Elizabeth... also of my father and surviving brother" (Shelley 78). He starts to appreciate nature once again and on one of his trips he meets his creation. "

Justine: She takes the fall for the murder of William even though she is innocent. She is convinced to confess by a priest who did believe she was guilty. " I did confess, but I confessed a lie. I confessed, that I might obtain absolution; but now that falsehood lies heavier at my heart than all my other sins" (Shelley 73). She is executed. Elizabeth: She continues to believe till the end that Justine was innocent and after her execution, she lost all faith in humanity. "'I wish,' cried she, 'that I were to die with you; I cannot live in this world of misery" (Shelley 75). She was a true friend to Justine and supportive of her innocence till the end. Monster: He has superhuman strengths and can speak perfect English. Even though Victor wants to fight him, he keeps calm and explains that he just wants Victor to hear his side of the story. Even after everything Victor says, the monster still does not attack. His only request is for Victor to listen to his story. " He easily eluded me and said, 'Be calm! I entreat you to hear me before you give vent to your hatred on my devoted head. Have I not suffered enough, that you seek to increase my misery?" (Shelley 86). Alphonse: Tries to bring the family from depression by taking everyone to the house in Belrive. He is hit hard by Williams death as well but wants to cheer up his family. "'Do you think, Victor,' said he, 'that I do not suffer also... augmenting their unhappiness by an appearance of immoderate grief?" (Shelley 78).

Style:

Metaphor: "... but now misery has come home, and men appear to me as monster thirsting for each other's blood" (Shelley 79). Elizabeth has lost faith in humanity once Justine got executed. She knew she was innocent but still she got executed and this hurt Elizabeth. She use to be the caring one, now this event changed her. Elizabeth always though injustice only happened in far away lands but now that the misery has come home, her views have changed. She goes about comparing men to monsters. Since she thinks both want each other's blood. Foreshadowing: ".. I beheld those I loved spend vain sorrow upon the graves of William and Justine, the first hapless victims to my unhallowed arts" (Shelley 76). Victor knows that William and Justine were only the first victims of the monster he created. He foreshadows that the monster will kill more people. It was because of Victor that this monster was created in the first place so he holds himself responsible for all the deaths. He foreshadows that more grief will come his way.

Themes:

Marginalized" You, my creator, abhor me; what hope can I gather from your fellow creatures, who owe me nothing?" (Shelley 87). The monster is regarded as non-human and cannot blend into human life. He is excluded from everything and he does not even have a choice. He is excluded because he looks different, but can act the same as any human. He is hated by everyone for barely any reasons. He has to live in lands where humans do not inhabit like the desert mountains and dreary glaciers.

Frankenstein Literary Significance Chapters 11-14

Plot:

The monster starts off his story by explaining the confusion he felt when he first woke and how he learned everything from the sensations he felt. At one point he enters a hut in search for food, which results in a man running away in fear from him. He then travels on to a village and upon entering he makes children scream, woman faint, and people start to run away and attack him at the same time which teaches him that he is hated. He ends up staying in a hovel beside a cottage where a family of 3 are living. He starts to observe the family and starts to actually care about them, he learns that they are poor and miserable, he starts helping them by gathering wood and clearing snow at night. He starts to learn their names and their language so he can communicate with them if the time comes. He finally understands that he is one of a kind in this world and is isolated, people hate him because of the way he looks. One day a woman arrives who makes Felix very happy, her name is Safie and she doesn't know the language so she starts to learn which also helps the monster learn. He finally starts to understand the world and realizes that because of his differences he will always be marginalized. The monster hears the story of how the family in the cottage was once rich but got poor, then exiled and how Safie ended up here.

Characters:

Monster: He has to learn about the world all on his own. He is shown as being caring and sensitive. " I had been accustomed, during the night, to steal a part of their store for my own consumption... I abstained and satisfied

myself with berries, nuts, and roots which I gathered from a neighbouring wood" (Shelley 99). He is marginalized by everyone he meets because of the way he looks. Felix: He is the brother and son of the family living in the cottage. He works a lot and is miserable till he meets Safie again. " Felix seemed ravished with delight when he saw her, every trait of sorrow banished from his face... at that moment I thought him as beautiful as the stranger" (Shelley 105). It was because of him that Safie's father escaped from prison. Safie: The daughter of the Turkish merchant. She fell in love with Felix and went against her father's wishes to be with him again. " By some papers of her father which fell into her hands she heard of the exile of her lover... but at length she formed her determination" (Shelley 114). De Lacey: He is the father of the family living in the cottage, and he is blind. He comes from a rich and strong family in France. " The name of the old man was De Lacey. He was descended from a good family in France," (Shelley 110). Agatha: She is the daughter and sister of the cottage family. She also works as hard as her brother. She is also sad and miserable. " I was inquisitive to know why Felix appeared so miserable and Agatha so sad" (Shelley 102).

Style:

Hyperbole: " My senses were gratified and refreshed by a thousand scents of delight and a thousand sights of beauty" (Shelley 104). The monster is appreciates the smells and sights of spring. He is amazed with all the smells and all the sights of beauty he sees. He exaggerates his what he sees and smells. His senses were gratified and refreshed by all these scents of delight

and sights of beauty. The monster loves nature. Imagery: " Her hair of a shining raven black, and curiously braided... each cheek tinges with a lovely pink" (Shelley 104-105). The monster is amazed by the beauty of the woman who walks into the cottage on horseback, who turns out to be Safie. He describes her beauty with a sense of compassion, as if he is really enjoying looking at this being. The monster is astonished by her beauty and angry with his ugliness. Metaphor: " On hearing this word... and I beheld a countenance of angelic beauty and expression" (Shelley 104). The monster is amazed at the beauty of this lady. He compares her beauty to that of an angel. He is completely astonished by it.

Themes:

Secrecy" My mode of life in my hovel was uniform. During the morning I attended the motions of the cottagers... the remainder of the day was spent in observing my friends" (Shelley 102). The monster is secretly living in the small hovel observing his human neighbours. He knows that he will probably scare off the family if he comes out so he hides in secrecy and observes them. He learns of their language and even helps them at night time. He has no choice but to live in secrecy because if he does come out, he will be marginalized. Monstrosity" I had admired the perfect forms of my cottagers... but how was I terrified when I viewed myself in a transparent pool!" (Shelley 101). The monster is horrified at the way he looks and finally realizes he really is a monster. He is terrified at his reflection in the pond and is jealous of the perfect forms of the family he sees in the cottage. He is considered a monster because of his looks. Marginalized" Having thus arranged my

dwelling... for I saw the figure of a man at a distance, and I remembered too well my treatment the night before to trust myself in his power" (Shelley 94). The monster is being marginalized by society because of the way he looks. He had an incident in a village where he made people either flee, or attack him just by being there. He was scared to confront any humans as he did not want it to happen again. He is being marginalized because people think he is a monster.