

Victor frankenstein creature as the mirror

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Laced with haunting similarities between the creator and the created, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* implements the Doppelganger effect to further develop the story of one man's quest for knowledge and the journey that ensues. From the beginning of his journey, to his eventful demise, Victor Frankenstein travels through a broad range of emotions and experiences, almost all of which his creature endures as well. As Shelley develops the character of Victor Frankenstein, she uses the creature- as his doppelganger-to dramatize, and further elaborate upon, what cannot be explicitly explained. It is Victor's passion rivaled by the creature's anger, Victor's determination mirrored by the creature's obsession, and the isolation they each cause the other that brings the " good" and " bad" aspects of Frankenstein's character forth into a new light.

From his first days at Ingolstadt to his last in the Arctic, Victor Frankenstein's passion for his sciences never falters; it is a byproduct of those sciences-the creature-that transforms Victor's strong emotions into the anger and revenge he dies with. From their first post-animation meeting together, the creature develops an intense anger toward the man who created him, and the feeling is a mutual one. " All men hate the wretched; how then, must I be hated, who am miserable beyond all living things! Yet you, my creator, detest and spurn me, thy creature, to whom thou art bound by ties only dissoluble by the annihilation of one of us" (95). The creature cannot make sense of the rejection he is being faced with, just as Victor cannot make sense of how this detestable being is still standing before him. It is his misguided passion that leads the creature to make many of the threats that he directs towards Frankenstein. As he promises to " revenge [his] injuries; if

[he] cannot inspire love, then [he] will cause fear, and chiefly towards [Victor does he] swear inextinguishable hatred” because he is his creator (148).

As Frankenstein is angered by the actions of the creature—whose own actions are, in essence, motivated by anger and a lack of understanding— the creature seeks revenge for what he cannot control. It is his encounter with Felix at the cottage that leads the creature to search for Frankenstein with many questions as his “ feelings were those of rage and revenge” (137).

With his confusion of matters as fuel, the creature’s anger continues as he witnesses Frankenstein destroy the partner he had been working to animate and “ with a devilish despair and revenge” and seeks to murder another person emotionally close to Victor (171). The abuse Frankenstein suffers at the hands of the creature causes him to become just as consumed by anger and revenge as he follows his creature through Europe in hopes of destroying him. Although his father warns him to not be filled with “ brooding thoughts of vengeance against the assassin, but with feelings of peace and gentleness” when he hears about William’s murder, Victor neglects this advice and allows—as the creature does—for revenge to consume him (66).

After Elizabeth’s death, Victor’s “ present situation was one in which all voluntary thought was swallowed up and lost. [He] was hurried away by fury; revenge alone consumed him to be calculating and calm” (210). Similar to the creature’s response, Frankenstein is frustrated and vengeful after the destruction of his companion and wishes to destroy the person responsible. In his seemingly endless pursuit of the creature, his frustration overtakes and “ Again [does he] vow vengeance; again [does he] devote thee miserable fiend, to torture and death” (214). Dr. Frankenstein’s passions

never before “ turned towards childish pursuits but to an eager desire to learn, and not to learn all things indiscriminately,” but he loses that with the animation of the creature (26).

The determination Victor carries with him to succeed is paralleled by the creature’s as they work towards different goals; it is the consuming facet of their drives that engenders destructive obsession. The creature’s only request of Dr. Frankenstein is to make him happy by presenting him with a mate, and he goes to obsessive lengths to ensure it is fulfilled. When Victor first concedes to his creature, and promises to create another just as visually displeasing as he, the creature promises that if Frankenstein is to “ Depart to your home and commence your labours; I shall watch their progress with unutterable anxiety; and fear not but that when you are ready I will appear” (151). Frankenstein sets out to complete his work, determined to give the creature what he is asking for and rid mankind of the monster; however, with Frankenstein’s refusal to continue working on another creature any longer “ The monster saw [the] determination in [Victor’s] face, and gnashed his teeth in the impotence of anger” as he realizes he will not be given what he has been longing for (173).

With no mate for the creature, and those who Victor loves being murdered every time the creature is upset, at a certain point, neither Victor nor the creature have much to live for, but they are obsessed with ridding the world of the other that they feel obligated to remain alive until their task is complete. The creature makes many promises to Frankenstein- all which he fulfills-and he “ will work at [his] destruction; nor finish until [he] desolates

[his] heart, so that [he] shall curse the hour of [his] birth" (148). The doppelganger relationship between the creature and Frankenstein does not only extend to the characteristic that the two share, but also in the way that the creature, literally, follows Victor around as if he is his ghostly double lurking in the shadows- just as he was on his wedding night. After Elizabeth's murder that night, Victor, once more, allows his emotions to manifest themselves as evil their counterparts while his determination for developing science and learning is replaced by an obsession with the creature and revenge. Victor " worked hard for nearly two years, for the sole purpose of infusing life into an inanimate object. For this [he] had deprived [him]self of rest and health;" yet his determination to create quickly transforms into an obsession to destroy (48). Upon Elizabeth's death, Frankenstein vows to never give up his " search until he or I perish;" that obsession does become the end of him (214).

Despite being introverted from the beginning, Frankenstein was still formerly capable of being an integral member of society, with friendships and acceptance from all; the creature takes Victor back into a state of depression and loneliness that he has had to endure. The creature never escapes the exile he is born into. Finally able to tell his side of the story to someone who will not run away, the creature discloses to Walton what it has taken him this whole time to figure out, that sympathy will not be given to him by any biased human being. Even in the cottagers, whom the creature expected to be the most understanding, he finds "[him]self unsympathized with, wished to tear up the trees, spread havoc and destruction around [him] and then to have sat down and enjoyed the ruin" (137). Justly upset over his loneliness at

the time, Victor further makes the decision for both of them to remain isolated. Victor's refusal to animate a companion for the creature is, essentially, what causes him to be lonely and, in turn, murder those whom the doctor loves. Frankenstein cuts himself off from the rest of the world for the two years he is trying to animate the creature, in addition to the years he has spent worrying about the monster and what harm he can cause. Even when Frankenstein finds a possible friend in Walton, it makes no difference because his anger and obsession have driven him too far to leave the depressive state he will die in, and he does not wish to create any bonds that the creature—or he—can destroy.

Victor Frankenstein and the creature bring out the worst in each other; however, without one, the other would not be fully human. As the novel progresses, and Victor's story unfolds, the characteristics of Frankenstein and his creature meld together to represent one person and their Doppelganger connection proves the complexity of Victor's self. The line often blurs between the two characters, but as would be expected, it serves the purpose of broadening Victor Frankenstein's character and dramatizing the aspects of his character that serve the greatest purpose in his battle with the creature.