

Suspense in frankenstein

Literature, Russian Literature



Shelley uses isolation as a literary technique to create gothic horror and suspense. In the novel the main character Frankenstein 'paid no visit to Geneva' whilst he was working to create the monster. In working so hard, Frankenstein isolated himself from others and concentrated only on his goals being 'solely wrapped up' in his purpose. Through this Shelley makes it clear to the reader that Frankenstein is alone, thus creating suspense as the reader assumes that something will go wrong and in the event of this there will be nobody to help Frankenstein.

Shelley's choice of vocabulary, gothic words and phrases, is a contributory factor in the development of horror and suspense in Chapter four. Shelley's repetition of the word 'darkness' is used to create horror and suspense in the novel. This is a deliberate and effective attempt by Shelley to create a frightening atmosphere. The darkness is emphasised through repetition. Shelley chooses to emphasise the word darkness because of the significance of the word as it is a metaphor for Frankenstein's situation.

Darkness is symbolic of Frankenstein's of what he is experiencing as he cannot see what the outcome of creating the monster, just as one cannot see in the dark. Suspense is created in the chapter, this is also foreshadowing. The reader expects a sinister result from Frankenstein creating the monster. However, the reader does not know at this stage exactly what will happen and therefore suspense is created for the reader in not knowing what will happen. Shelley also uses rhetorical questions to create suspense.

A method of creating suspense is slowing down the pace of the novel, this is the effect when Shelley uses rhetorical questions to create in the novel.

Rhetorical questions cause the reader pause and answer the questions slowing the reader down and therefore, slowing down the pace of the novel.

This prolongs the reader's suspense as they have not yet found out what happens in the novel because they are being slowed down by the rhetorical questions. In Chapter four Frankenstein asks ' who shall conceive the horrors....? ' causing the reader to think about the ghastly deeds Frankenstein may be performing.

Through this, the pace of the novel is slowed down creating suspense. In chapter five Shelley uses pathetic fallacy to create horror. The frightening description of the weather is used to create a scary atmosphere. This is seen in the novel as chapter five takes place on a ' dreary night' which is used to create the terrifying atmosphere in the chapter. Additionally, this phrase creates an ominous sense of foreboding as the reader expects something terrible to happen - the fact that the chapter takes place on a dreary night gives the reader a clue of something terrible will happen.

Short simple sentences are used by Shelley in chapter five to create horror. Horror is created as Frankenstein says ' I trembled' when he thought that Clerval intended to ask him about the monster. The structure of the short sentence creates a natural pause in the reading of the novel causing the reader to think about the meaning of sentence. The reader can infer that if Frankenstein trembles at the possible mention of the monster, the monster

is indeed very frightening which creates horror as the reader is then scared of the monster.

The message of the novel is that scientists should have self-control in their work to avoid becoming obsessed, otherwise this will lead to their 'destruction' as was the case with Frankenstein. In the novel Captain Walton learned from Frankenstein and decided to put an end to his obsession of reaching the north. Frankenstein loses everything in trying to achieve his scientific goals, Shelley warns that this will happen to others who become as obsessed with their work as Frankenstein was.

In the 21st century there have been a number of scientific advancements such as the development of stem cell technology. This is particularly relevant as stem cell technology is about creating or extending life, under pretences deemed immoral by some. An embryo is created, parts are then extracted from the created embryo for medical use - helping people. Shelley did not agree with science intervening heavily with nature. However, scientists have good intentions working with stem cell technology as this could mean the ability to cure currently incurable diseases, surely this is a positive thing?

Conversely, Frankenstein also had good intentions in creating the monster because he wanted to be able to bring dead people back to life so people would not have to experience the death of a loved one as he had experienced, nevertheless, this still led to his destruction. Perhaps it is unlikely that Shelley would discourage the advancements of science if she saw the positive effects they had on today's society and the positive implications they have for the society of tomorrow.

Shelley effectively creates gothic horror and suspense through the use of literary and linguistic techniques. In Chapters four and five horror and suspense are more strongly created than other parts of the novel, as these are the main parts of the novel being the chapters in which most of the plot advances occur. Show preview only The above preview is unformatted text This student written piece of work is one of many that can be found in our GCSE Mary Shelley section.