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No doubt, creation, annihilation and conservation in Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein" provide a background for the exploration of the ruination and undoing of particular human attributes. "The Modern Prometheus," the subtitle of Shelley's novel further reinforces this notion. In fact, this notion is further reinforced by the fact that Shelley's novel can be regarded as a modern version of the classic German legend of Faust. Shelley puts together the idea of the ruination of human attributes as a result of self-discovery as evidenced by Frankenstein, who claims that he has been blasted in hopes, and the same can be said about his creation. Even though characters like Frankenstein, the creature and Walton experience their own forms of self-discovery, it is what they learn in the process that drives them towards their ultimate paths.

Victor Frankenstein has such an uncontrolled thirst for knowledge that he is not able to control his urge to unearth as much knowledge as he possibly can. Ultimately, it is this uncontrolled thirst of knowledge that leads Victor Frankenstein to creating a hostile creature that turns out to be not only the source of his own ruination but also the cause of the death of his loved ones. One source of Victor Frankenstein's penchant for science was "a volume of the works of Cornelius Agrippa" that he happened to find back when he was a teenager (Shelley). This is what piques his interest into pursuing the philosophical tradition of alchemy. However, Victor Frankenstein's thirst for and urge obtain knowledge is still not quenched, even after he begins learning alchemy at home. This is why Frankenstein decides to attend the university at Ingolstadt, leaving his family and life in Geneva behind. At this point, it is not difficult for readers to picture how obsessed Frankenstein is

with obtaining knowledge, more so because his mother had passed away right before his departure.

The fact that Victor Frankenstein still leaves and moves to Ingolstadt is enough for the reader to realize, at this point in Shelley's novel, that Victor Frankenstein is consumed by his urge to educate himself and he places unnaturally significant importance on education. Even upon his arrival in the city of Ingolstadt, the very first people that Victor Frankenstein begins seeking are those who could perhaps quench his thirst for learning and obtaining knowledge. Mr. Waldman, a professor, is among those people. In fact, Victor Frankenstein's endeavors and the direction he eventually heads into are significantly influenced by Mr. Waldman, which means that he plays an indirect role in Frankenstein's devastation. It is Mr. Waldman who adds the spark to Frankenstein's already budding interest in chemistry by referring to the discipline as modern-day alchemy, and encouraging Frankenstein to "really a man of science," rather than just merely experimenting. Additionally, while Frankenstein was significantly inspired by the professor's advice, he also admits the "memorable" day on which he took heed to that advice also decided his future destiny, i. e. his ultimate ruination.

Victor's act of creating the creature and the relationship that gradually develops can be regarded as reminiscent of the relationship between a parent and a child (Moers). In fact, such an assumption sheds light on the complexity and profundity on Frankenstein's devastation. When parents make the honorable decision to have a child, they prepare themselves to be dedicated, patient, and understanding, but Frankenstein's act of creating the

creature is nowhere near that. Even if the creature is regarded as Frankenstein's child, he certainly does not have any compassion for the creature. It can be noted that Victor Frankenstein is definitely not without generous instincts, but when it comes to his creation, he seems to show no moral obligation toward the creature. In this regard, Victor Frankenstein's act of creating the creature is a direct consequence of his inclination to consume knowledge. Ironically, the fact that Frankenstein was absolutely incompetent to carry out such an act leads the creature towards the same parlous fate as that of Frankenstein himself, i. e. devastation. No doubt, the creature was a reflection of Frankenstein himself, both condemned to devastation (Storment).

Soon after the act of creation, Victor Frankenstein deserts the creature, which sets the creature on a path of destruction, not only its own but that of others as well, while just like Frankenstein, his creation is afflicted by the same uncanny thirst for knowledge. Since the creature is seen as a peculiar being and there is no one to guide him, the emotional pain that the character feels is rather strong. Since there is no one to lead the creature towards the right direction, he is set onto a path of destructive and negative self-discovery. What the creature ends up discovering is that he is nothing more than a monster and a murderer, a horrendous being that everyone around him believes to be capable of doing horrifying and terrible things. The self-discovery and realization that he is apparently filthy, something undesired and unwanted, with even his creator regretting having released him upon the world, somewhat transforms the confused and helpless creature into a ruthless monster that sets out on a path of destruction.

Instead of directly exacting his revenge upon Victor Frankenstein, the creature begins murdering the people that are dear to Frankenstein, out of hatred. The very first person the creature murders is William, Frankenstein's brother, followed by Henry Clerval, his childhood friend, and ultimately, Elizabeth, Frankenstein's wife. Indirectly, the creature's murderous acts also result two other deaths, namely that of Frankenstein's father and Victor Frankenstein himself. It cannot be denied that all of these murders are committed by the creature, but Victor Frankenstein is equally responsible for the deaths because it was his lack of commitment and guidance that the creature resorted to such monstrous violence. The creature even comes face to face with Victor Frankenstein to inform him of how he is feeling. It is notable here that the creature attempts to justify and explaining the reasoning of his actions to Frankenstein by stating that he understands that he deserves to be hated because he is nothing more than a dejected being, but at the same time reminds Frankenstein that it was he who created him (Bloomfield).

Even though Victor Frankenstein is the source of the creature's infuriation, but in a sense, the creature's own thirst for knowledge also augments his rage and self-hate. Soon after coming into this world, the creature goes on his own quest to find some meaning in his life, and understand worldly relationships that the people around him seem to maintain with one another. In his attempt figure these out, the creature teaches himself to read and even monitors a human family, and his endeavors are somewhat reminiscent of Victor Frankenstein's own thirst for knowledge that led him to attend the university at Ingolstadt. The creature even tries to communicate and connect

with members of the family he had been monitoring, but their reaction is that of extreme aversion and loathing due to his repulsive appearance. Thus, the creature ends up discovering that he never be adored or loved, which makes him even more hateful, and he comes to the conclusion that he is indeed an exiled monster whose only purpose is to cause anguish and suffering (Bloomfield).

Up until Victor Frankenstein meets Robert Walton, the effects of his self-discovery and the deeds he commits as a result were nothing but damaging and detrimental. But Frankenstein's interaction with Walton seems to reflect the fruitful consequence of his self-discovery, or at least one positive aspect of it. After having persistently pursued his thirst for knowledge and struggled with his own creation, Victor Frankenstein realizes how wrong he was, and expresses wholeheartedly that he hopes Walton does not get "stung" by the same thirst for "knowledge and wisdom" that destroyed Frankenstein himself. Victor Frankenstein's struggle and suffering serves as an example to Walton, who makes up his mind that he does not wish to subject himself to the same, which in a sense is Walton's moment of self-discovery. Victor advises Walton to be content with peacefulness in life rather than pursuing ambitious desires the way he had done, and Walton pays heed to Frankenstein's words. Ultimately, Frankenstein's and the monster's self-discovery seem to sharply contrast Walton's self-discovery, which enables him to make the right decision that ensures his and his crew's survival. In conclusion, it is apparent that Marry Shelley has presented two different aspects of self-discovery in her novel, "Frankenstein." There seems to be a striking contrast between these aspects of self-discovery, where one appears

to be destructive in nature, leading to numerous deaths, while other seems to be enlightening, which ends up saving lives. Therefore, it can be deduced that it is not the process of self-discovery that is a fault, rather it is what a person learns in the process of self-discovery is what determines the direction in which they will be headed, as in the case of Frankenstein and his creation, and Walton.

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