

Who was the real monster? frankenstein

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



The monster rose from the table. He stared at the creature whom he had created, then ran away in terror. He ran away because the monster looked nothing like anything he had ever seen before; it was monstrous and utterly terrifying. He thought it would harm him as monsters are commonly portrayed to do. What would any human do in a situation like that? Prejudice is not an emotion in itself; it is an offshoot of fear. He feared the monster, which is why he acted out of prejudice and judged the monster simply based on its appearance. Prejudice is an opinion formed beforehand or without knowledge based often on physical appearance.

In Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein*, readers often ask who the real monster is. Is it the monster himself for looking like a monster and killing many innocent people? Or is it Victor for creating such a terrible monster? The answer is neither. When examined closely, it becomes clear that the real monster in Mary Shelley's novel is prejudice. Because of prejudice, Victor is scared of his own creation and disowns the monster. Because of prejudice, everybody is scared of the monster and never even gives him a chance to get to know them simply because of the way he looks. Because of prejudice, the monster kills his first victim.

The prejudice against the monster is so great that it even convinces the monster himself that he is a monster and is not worthy of life. There are no characters in *Frankenstein* that are truly monsters; the only real monster is the prejudice instilled in these characters who do bad things. Victor Frankenstein created the monster with good intentions. In fact, he "had desired it with an ardour that far exceeded moderation. . . ." (Shelley 43).

When the monster awoke, Victor feared his own creation. Victor prejudices his creation because he fears what it is capable of and runs away.

Victor expresses his fear of his creation when he says, “. . . but now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart. Unable to endure the aspect of the being I had created, I rushed out of the room... ” (Shelley 43). Victor thought that the monster would be beautiful and amazing, but upon seeing that the monster did not turn out the way he had expected it to, Victor becomes scared and acts out of prejudice, leaving the room. After Victor leaves the room and retreats to his bed chamber, he awakes from his sleep and beholds the monster.

Victor automatically becomes frightened and flees the room, thinking that the monster would harm him. Remember, prejudice is an opinion formed beforehand or without knowledge based often on physical appearance. Victor's prejudice is evident when he says: I beheld the wretch- the miserable monster whom I had created. He held up the curtain of the bed; and his eyes, if eyes they may be called, were fixed on me. 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, seeming to detain me, but I escaped and rushed downstairs (Shelley 44).

Simply the words that Victor uses to describe the monster, whom he does not even know, are terrible! Victor calls the monster “ wretch” and calls his mouth “ jaws” as if the monster is some type of animal. The monster even tries to speak to Victor, but Victor does not listen to what the monster has to say because Victor becomes scared of the monster based only on the way he

looks. This is a clear example of prejudice. The monster reaches out an arm and, unknowing of what the monster will even do, Victor assumes that the monster is trying to “ detain” him, but he “ escaped and rushed downstairs”.

Certainly, Victor’s behaviour is not commendable; however, his actions are a result of his prejudice alone. Not only does Victor prejudge the monster only based on the way he looks, everybody the monster meets prejudices him and is scared of him. In the monster’s first encounter with a man, the man “ turned on hearing a noise, and perceiving [the monster], he shrieked loudly, and quitting the hut, ran across the fields with a speed of which his debilitated form hardly appeared capable” (Shelley 93).

The man sees the monster and, without saying a word, automatically prejudges the monster to be dangerous based only on the way he looks then “[runs] across the fields with a speed of which his debilitated form hardly appear[s] capable”. The man did not appear to be a bad man. In fact, his breakfast “ consisted of bread, cheese, milk. . . ” (Shelley 93) just like any other normal man. This man is not a monster for treating the monster poorly, it is clearly the prejudice instilled in him when he is overcome by fear that makes him run away from the monster.

Upon the monster’s second encounter with a human, he enters a house and sees a family who also prejudges him based only on the way he looks. The monster “ had hardly placed [his] foot within the door before the children shrieked, and one of the women fainted” (Shelley 94). The people do not even give the monster a chance to speak. They do not even have the slightest clue what his personality is like. But, they prejudge him and

automatically assume that he is a harmful person based only on the way he looks.

Some of the villagers even “ attacked [the monster], until, grievously bruised by stones and many other kinds of missile weapons, [the monster] escaped to the open country. . . ” (Shelley 94). Certainly, the people of the village do seem like monsters, attacking the monster and hitting him with stones. But, the villagers are not the true monsters. They are simply scared for the lives of their families, so they act out of prejudice and without even giving the monster a chance to present himself, they chase him away unwilling to give him a chance because they do not trust somebody who is so horrific looking.

It is clear here that it is solely the prejudice in them and nothing else that makes them drive the monster out of the village. Upon his third encounter with humans, the monster is living in a hovel that is joined to a cottage. Through a hole the monster sees the inside of the cottage and learns about the family that consisted of: a blind father, an unhappy son, and a sweet innocent daughter. The monster becomes attached to the family and “ when they were unhappy, [the monster] felt depressed; when they rejoiced, [the monster] sympathized in their joys” (Shelley 100).

The monster does everything he can to help the family out while remaining hidden. In fact “[the monster] often took [the son’s] tools, the use of which [the monster] quickly discovered, and brought home firing sufficient for the consumption of several days” (Shelley 99). The family was very happy about this, and “ when [the daughter] opened the door in the morning, appeared greatly astonished on seeing a great pile of wood on the outside” (Shelley

99). Had the family found out that it had been some ordinary man helping them out, they would have thanked him and greeted him with joy.

But, when the family saw the monster, “ Agatha fainted, and Safie, unable to attend to her friend, rushed out of the cottage. Felix darted forward and with supernatural force tore [the monster] from his father. . . ” (Shelley 123). It is clearly evident here that prejudice is the real monster in Frankenstein. The old man is blind, and upon meeting the monster he does not run away, or faint, or attack the monster. The old man greets the monster and treats him just as he would treat anyone else. Remember, prejudice is an opinion formed beforehand or without knowledge based on appearance.

The old man is blind so he could not prejudge based on the monster’s appearance however, Agatha, Safie, and Felix all see the monster and prejudge him based on his appearance alone; thus acting out of prejudice. The old man could not prejudge, which is why he did not treat the monster poorly. Again, it is clearly evident here that the people are not truly monsters; it is the prejudice in them that makes them behave badly. Throughout the novel, the monster is treated poorly because of prejudice.

Ironically, he also kills his first victim: William, because of prejudice. At first sight, the monster says that William was “ a beautiful child, who came running into the recess [the monster] had chosen, with all sportiveness of infancy” (Shelley 131). However, upon hearing that the child’s “ papa is a syndic- he is M. Frankenstein. . . ” (Shelley 131), the monster “ grasped [William’s] throat to silence him, and in a moment he lay dead at [the monster’s] feet” (Shelley 131). This clearly shows the monster’s actions are a result of his prejudice towards his creator.

Because he finds out that the William's father is M. Frankenstein, he prejudices William to be just like Victor Frankenstein- the monster's creator, and takes William's innocent life. The prejudice against the monster is so great, that it convinces even the monster himself, that he is a monster! The monster's creator, Victor, is prejudice towards him. The family the monster loves and cares for greatly is also prejudice towards him. Every single human other than the blind man who could not be prejudice, is prejudice towards the monster!

Even a pure innocent child like William is prejudice towards the monster! It is absolutely clear through all of these examples, that prejudice is the real monster in Mary Shelley's novel Frankenstein. Prejudice is still evident in today's world, with major issues such as racism, as well as events in the past such as the Holocaust. In her novel Frankenstein, Mary Shelley warns readers about prejudice, and it is important that people are not prejudice in their lives today so that all tragedy can be avoided.