

# Frankenstein- sympathy for victor or the monster

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



At the beginning of the novel, Frankenstein retells his story of how his experiment backfired and how the Monster is evil because it killed many people that were dear to Victor. At this point, the reader begins to sympathise with Victor entirely for two reasons, which consist of the monster's brutality towards members of Victor's family and for ruining all of Victor's hopes and aspirations. Victor tells Walton how his creation was meant to be 'beautiful' but explains how his enthusiasm for his project was dashed when creation and creator first came face to face, or as put by Victor, " the beauty of the dream vanished and disgust filled my heart. "

Victor describes his creation as a monster or machine rather than a human which it was designed to be using a powerful adjective in the shape of " convulsive," used to describe the creature's movements. Shelley also uses the description of the monster to emphasise the effect that the monster's horrific appearance had on Frankenstein. By the end of chapter 5, where the monster comes to life, the reader's sympathy for Victor is even stronger than before because Frankenstein is portrayed to be weak due to all the effort he has put into his experiment and the disappointment he feels at the end.

He exclaims, " for this I had deprived myself of rest and health! " However, the disgust felt by Victor towards the monster also means an increase in sympathy for the monster. In Chapter 10, the monster enlightens Frankenstein of how he felt neglected and unwanted by Victor just because of his appearance. Mary Shelley attempts to teach the reader not to judge a book by its cover, as Frankenstein did to the monster. This pity rises yet further when the monster relates how he tried to help people, tried to be kind, tried to be normal, but his kindness was not recognised and when

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people met him, they would attack him in fear or would run away when they saw his hideous appearance.

Whenever the monster tried to commit a good deed, it was thrown back into his face in such a way that the monster became bitter. " Believe me  
Frankenstein: I was benevolent; my soul glowed with love and humanity....  
you, my creator, abhorred me.... shall I not then hate them who abhor me? "  
Therefore, the impact on the readers is that they now have sympathy for the monster because he has explained his side of the story and this is a different picture to Victor's.

In chapters 11 and 12 the monster is portrayed as child-like and innocent. He doesn't know how to read or write and before he sees himself for the first time in the reflection of the water, he did not even know what he looked like. " But how was I terrified when I viewed myself in a transparent pool!.. I was filled with the bitterest sensations of despondence and mortification. Seeing his hideous appearance, he knows why people looked at him with so much contempt. Upon seeing his reflection in the water he knows why people attack him or flee from him. Words like 'despondence' and 'mortification' stress the suffering of the monster.

He is portrayed to be vulnerable as he is abandoned by his creator. Just as babies are dependent on their parents, the monster requires Frankenstein's guidance but does not receive any, again getting sympathy from the reader. In chapter 15 there are two turning points where the monster's attitude towards mankind changes. The first of these turning points is upon finding Victor's journal of his first impressions of his creation. This leaves the

monster with many unanswered questions including why he disgusted his creator. The second turning point is when the monster is talking to the old man and Felix assumes wrongly that the monster is trying to harm him.

This is a turning point in the novel since the monster realises that his appearance will always let him down, despite his good intentions. When he realises the De Lacey's have fled because of him, he shows his frustration and anger by setting the cottage alight. Regardless of the fact that what the monster did was wrong, this time the reader can see that what he did was justified because the reasons were outlined by the monster, in his own point of view. When Victor is told by the monster to create him a mate, Victor agrees because he is blackmailed into doing so and fears for the wellbeing of his family.

The reader is encouraged at this point to understand the monster's loneliness and need for love. He wants somebody to respect him for what he is; someone who will not reject him. He seems peaceful and the reader takes his side for the time being. However, the reader also realises that he will go through extreme measures to get his companion by telling Frankenstein: ". .. if I cannot inspire love, I will cause fear; I will work at your destruction. " This makes the creature seem manipulative, controlling and above all, evil. Even after the monster has killed Elizabeth, the reader still feels sympathetic to the monster since Victor didn't create him a companion, which the monster was perfectly justified to ask for, bearing in mind that Victor had neglected him.

Although he could have dealt with it in different way, the monster receives more sympathy due to his human emotions and his want for love and a companion. On the other hand, Victor seems to be in the wrong. In conclusion, the author changes the reader's views of the monster and Victor Frankenstein in various ways. First she tells the story from Victor Frankenstein's point of view, explaining how his family was destroyed by the monster and all the other evil things that he did. This was followed by seeing things from the monster's perspective in order for the monster to get sympathy.

This involves the reader learning of how he was rejected and neglected and how he helped people but didn't get anything in return, except for yet more rejection. The reader's sympathy is also with the monster because he is innocent; he had to suffer as a result of Victor Frankenstein's fatal ambition and when the reckless experiment failed, Frankenstein failed to take responsibility for his actions. All in all, the reader is led to sympathise equally with the monster and with Frankenstein.