

The ambitious quests frankenstein

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



The Ambitious Quests Frankenstein by Mary Shelley is a novel encircling the struggles that accompany the quest for ambition. Walton is driven by the desire of discovering new lands, Victor is driven by the ambitions of creating new life, but most important of all, the creature is driven by the desire to be seen as an equal in society. Upon reading it the first time in tenth grade, I mostly noticed the drastic consequences of desire and how one's life can be paved by their burning necessity to accomplish something.

I enjoyed the novel quite a lot, but along with school work comes a lot of stress since there was a significant amount of reading. And along with that a multitude of assignments and projects. But in the end, they only helped me develop the skills necessary for the essay that we were assigned to write.

Last year, I chose to write my paper about the hardships of the monster to fit in, and his instances of denial by humanity to be seen as a physically and mentally alike person, leading to his acts of rebellion against humanity.

Having burgeoned my knowledge of the wide perspective of features to notice in the text, I decided to read Frankenstein again because it can be very useful in making connections and writing essays on it, as it has a lot of complex and applicable aspects and details to it that I've noticed from my second read. Also, just the mere idea of creating life, dealing with monsters, and setting foot on journeys brings great interest and rapture to me.

However, having read so many new texts since tenth grade, and learned so much more about Literature, specifically archetypes, my second experience with Frankenstein was filled with sincere alacrity.

AP Literature has enlightened me of the significance of archetypes, and now that I've read this novel again, I realize how many there are, scattered around it. The first of these is the portrayal of seasons. Whenever it is spring, Victor is depicted as happy, hopeful, and positively speaking of nature and life, as evident in the line spring advanced rapidly...my senses were gratified by a thousand scents of delight and a thousand sights of beauty (Shelley, 136). However, when it is winter, things fall apart and everything is described as wretched and gloomy. For example, both Victor's peak illness and William's death, falsely accused to Justine, occurs in winter.

Frankenstein reveals that this whole winter...has been consumed in my sick room (65), foreshadowing the negative vibes of the season of winter.

Also, the death of his little brother meant everything to Victor, acting as the catalyst to everything that was to come later on in the novel. The role that season and weather play in this situation is very important as they clearly set the tone for the first death of the novel by the hands of the monster. As Victor approached the scene of William's death, the darkness and storm increased every minute, and the thunder burst with a terrific crash...vivid flashes of lightning dazzled my eyes (82). Instances like this, where Victor is mourning or experiences difficulties, are accentuated by bad weather.

Shelley may have done this to emphasize the significance of the situation to Victor's life; as, in this case, Victor continues to feel the guilt of William's death for the rest of the novel, demonstrated in the line, I called myself the murder of William (217). The second of the multitude of archetypes in the novel is scarring and deformity, which is a huge factor, as the creature is viewed and judged by his abhorred physical appearance.

He is shunned by society because of his abnormal and unusual characteristics, and even after so much efforts of kindness and care to be accepted as a human equal, is put down by humanity and is denied his ambition of becoming apart of society. As described by Victor, the monster was defined by his gigantic stature, and the deformity of its aspect, more hideous than belongs to humanity...it was the wretch, the filthy daemon, to whom I had given life (83). Being viewed solely by these features demoralizes the monster, ultimately leading to his ambition for revenge against his master.

But he at one point acknowledges his deformities when he says when I became fully convinced that I was in reality the monster that I am, I was filled with the bitterest sensations of despondence and mortification...I did not entirely know the fatal effects of this miserable deformity (133), hinting at his sense of both giving up and foreboding his tragic hero endings. Also, he demonstrates a sense of sorrow for himself, explaining that he was cursed with the life of a wretched human being. Yet a more impactful and significant scarring was the wound the monster was given by the little girl's father.

The man shoots the creature because he thinks, as a result of the deformed appearance of the monster, that the intruder is a threat to both him and his daughter. When the monster saves the girl from drowning – potentially a hint at a slight baptism – the man takes the girl from the monster and runs off. But the creature, being kind and worrisome, follows in hopes of helping, only to be appreciated for his duties with a gun[aimed] at my body and fired

(169). This bullet wound symbolizes a major turning point for the creature, as it represents a shift from wanting acceptance from society to seeking vengeance and violence upon humans. Shelley depicts the monster as the way he is in order to create an awareness of pity for the monster, as he is supposed to be the tragic hero of the novel; in a sense, his deformities allow the foreshadowing of his tragic end.

The third is the attempted communion between both Clerval and Victor. When Frankenstein isolates himself for three years in order to make the monster, he becomes sick and denies any contact with humanity. However, when Henry appears in Ingolstadt, Victor is happy and cheerful to have his friend, and it is now that he accepts communication with others. Victor explains that when Henry appeared, they both went to go get breakfast, a meal that Victor attempts to have after years of isolation. He reveals, I jumped over the chairs, clapped my hands, and laughed aloud (63). His joy for communion represents both cheers for his friend, but also a wicked, wild sense to him as a result of elongated periods of isolation.

Although a failed attempt at communion, the significance of this scene is that Victor accepts communion with none other than Henry, signifying the importance of his best friend. Before the meal can start, Victor immediately becomes ill, thus Clerval helps Victor regain his health for the next couple of months; again, only eating with Henry. Their relationship represents a complex and entwined connection, and when Clerval tragically dies, Frankenstein is nothing. He is left in despair and ruins and is sent to a mental asylum, no longer having the care and passion of a loving friend. Unhinged,

he is drowned in insane thoughts of revenge. Shelley purpose behind this is to show Frankenstein's self-centeredness, emphasizing his lack of ability to survive without the help of others, suggesting a weak soul behind the genius and scientist silhouette.

Reading Frankenstein a second time was truly a different and unique experience, as I was able to use the list of short stories and novels I'd newly read to connect to the novel. First-off, having read *Thou Blind Man's Mark* by Sir Philip Sidney, I now had more knowledge on the subject of desire. The poem argued desire to be a trap, causing one pain and fatal consequences through the phrase *thou web of will* (Sidney, 4), which signifies the ability of desire to trap you in its complex and entwined problems. But desire in the eyes of Victor, Walton, and the monster is something that will give them what they want.

For Victor and Walton, it is power, and for the monster, it is acceptance by those who have power. So, having read the poem helped me create a link, and actually helped create a foreshadow of the outcome of each of their desires. Another connection was with the short story *Desiree's Baby* by Kate Chopin, as both Desiree and the creature leave the story by entering the water and not resurfacing, potentially a failed baptism. The monster, although evident that he wants to exult in the agony of the torturing flames (Shelley, 277) somewhere far away, jumps off the edge of the ship, borne away by the waves and lost in darkness and distance (Shelley, 277). However, Shelley purposefully left out the monster's resurfacing to leave the tale of the creature on hold and in the dark, potentially indicating at a failed

baptism, thus another archetype. This decision leaves us questioning whether or not the monster will fulfill his promise of burning himself, most likely done to leave the tragedy of the monster in the hands of the readers.

Another connection I can make between Frankenstein and another book I read since last year is with *Things Fall Apart*. Both novels follow the same journey, of quest, tragedy, and failure. Had I not read *Things Fall Apart*, I would not have been able to make this connection, but now that I have read both, I can tell how similar they are in terms of journey. Okonkwo is destined with a burning desire to gain wealth and fame in his society. Walton and Victor desire to grow powerful from discovery and the creature desires to be accepted by humanity. Okonkwo faces consequences for his desires and ultimately leads to his exile.

From there, he experiences a tragic downfall and at the end, a dreadful termination. The exile of Okonkwo is also portrayed in Victor, through his period in jail, and the monster, through his period of life after being denied by humanity both in the cottage and in the forest. Victor and the monster face the consequences of their needs as Victor is threatened by the death of his entire family – except for one brother – and friends and the monster is threatened by his own life being taken away.

They both end in tragic deaths, truly reflecting Okonkwo's life. Walton, on the other hand, is warned of the dangers of desire, and quickly disposes of his ambitions of discovery and returns home. He symbolizes a survivor of the curse of desire portrayed by Okonkwo, Victor, and the monster, something not evident in either text. This relationship between both prominent, yet

century-apart novels is significant because they portray two great examples of the consequences and results of one who desires and fears failure and warns us the readers to beware of the cautions of ambition and where quests for such needs end up. Yet another outside the text connection I made this time around was the multitude of connections with the Bible. Along with the instances of Shelley relating the monster to Adam, Satan, and the Bible, I this time around realized the connection of Victor to God.

Frankenstein, like God, created life. No matter the scale at which each made life, Victor is portrayed by Shelley as God-like, something that passed my head when reading last year. This God-like status he is given by Shelley portrays that of a Christ Figure, yet another archetype in the sea of the complexities within the novel. At the beginning of the text, Frankenstein exclaims I will pioneer a new way, explore unknown powers, and unfold to the world the deepest mysteries of creation (46). This represents his selfishness and his desire to become the only one to create life and to gain power from his discovery.

However, Victor does not hold up to his Christ Figure description, as he both denies his friendship with the monster and declines the creatures offer of leaving him alone in return for a wife. Through these two actions, Frankenstein proves he is not God-like and is simply a human being with deep desires. The use of biblical allusions in the text demonstrates the creation of a good and evil side for each character, depicting a human behavior for each individual. The ability of Shelley to relate her novel to the

Bible is very fascinating, as it portrays intricate complexities and allows the reader to submerge even further into the meaning of her text.

My second experience reading the novel was highlighted by archetypes and connections, as I now had a wider expanse of knowledge, thanks to AP Literature. My second journey with Frankenstein was filled with a more positive experience, as I now had prior knowledge of the book, allowing me to look deeper into the text and discover things I had not during tenth grade. Such examples include archetypes, which I did not know what they were until two months ago. I was able to connect the novel to more works of literature this time as I had read so many more texts since last year.

Making connections and discovering new literary devices in the text was a highlight of my experience this time with the novel, and I believe that I have a better understanding of Shelley's purposes on writing the way she did. Her ability to portray the quests of ambition is very intriguing, as it dives deep into the potential dangers of desire and ambition.

Her killing off all of Victor's friends and family, including himself and the monster, reveals that ambition can be very fatal if not taken caution towards, as evident in Walton, who is the only ambitionist survivor. Therefore Shelley attempts to warn her readers of the evident and tragic results of desire, through the deaths of so many people in her novel. However, it is possible to assume that whatever was destined for Victor and the monster was eventually to come, depicting the inevitable repercussions of ambitious actions and decisions, which Shelley strongly portrays. But at the end of the

day, what's comin' will come, an' we'll meet it when it does (Hagrid). Works
Cited Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft. Frankenstein. Barnes & Noble, 2015.