
Frankenstein: Creator Versus His Creation

In *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley, a conflict that is as old as life itself develops over the course of the story; parent versus his own child, or in this case creator versus his creation, in a strive towards reconciliation. Victor Frankenstein and his creation become entangled in this fight, as the creation seeks its creator, and finds out about being abandoned by the one that gave it life. This conflict derives from the moment of creation itself, the inability of Victor to appreciate his creation, and the monster's need for a parental figure. The conflict addresses themes such as human desires for power, acceptance, one's reflection in their works, and the intimacy of a relationship between a parent and a son or daughter, which altogether contributes to the relevancy of the story.

While giving life to the creation that would be his legacy, Frankenstein did not look into the future. His lack of planning a life with the creation is basically the beginning of the end and is evident as soon as the monster opens its eyes. It is one of the reasons why Frankenstein is not remembered as a humane creator, but rather a mad scientist. Frankenstein was not discreet about his creation either, instead preferring to demonstrate his godlike powers. Frankenstein's desire for knowledge and great power can be seen throughout the story in many various points:

I confess that neither the structure of languages, nor the code of governments, nor the politics of various states possessed attractions for me. It was the secrets of heaven and earth that I desired to learn; and whether it was the outward substance of things or the inner spirit of nature and the mysterious soul of man that occupied me, still my inquiries were directed to the metaphysical, or in its highest sense, the physical secrets of the world. (Shelley 19)

This lust for power that comes through knowledge caused the creation of the monster and is the first source of animosity between the two.

After the creation, Frankenstein cannot force himself to accept the product of his work. He is blinded by the nature of the creation, incapable to see its humanity. As the creation searches for its maker, it feels the need to be accepted by Frankenstein, as no one else could possibly accept its appearance. However, the monster is in a search for approval that the reader later finds out is never granted. Not even Frankenstein accepts the creation, as even the monster says, "I ought to be thy Adam, but I am rather the fallen angel" (Shelley 69). This ultimate show of neglect makes the creation hate Frankenstein even more:

'Hateful day when I received life!' I exclaimed in agony. 'Accursed creator! Why did you form a monster so hideous that even you turned from me in disgust? God, in pity, made man beautiful and alluring, after his own image; but my form is a filthy type of yours, more horrid even from the very resemblance. Satan had his companions, fellow devils, to admire and encourage him, but I am solitary and abhorred.' (Shelley 93)

This is what drives the creation to pursue Frankenstein and bring misery to his life.

The creation's desire for a parental figure is evident from the start. It searches for acceptance in the person of Frankenstein, just like any other child and human being would. Sadly,

Frankenstein does not feel the same way, preferring to eliminate his only creation rather than help it thrive. Frankenstein's complete absence as a parental figure is what eventually drives his creation toward chaos and desire for revenge, which can be seen as the monster declares, "If I cannot inspire love, I will cause fear" (Shelley 104). With no role model, Frankenstein's creation develops a moral character, which serves as a major source of conflict.

Nonetheless, despite the evident hatred between the two, there are many parallels between the creator and his creation. Victor seems to deny the monster what he has denied himself, a family, life, or a wife. When the monster asks him for a female companion, he refuses, as he believes that his "evil passions will be renewed" and he "will then have a companion to aid you in the task of destruction" (Shelley 106). Victor's anger could be seen as frustration about his own life and how false it seems to be. He seems to have no emotional contact with fellow humans, he loses himself in scientific study for long periods and has very little contact with family or friends. Therefore, ironically, his relationship with the monster is very meaningful, because, despite the fact they despise each other, this is one of the only real emotions they both have in their lives.

Shelley's Frankenstein is not a story of man versus beast, but instead a story of creation versus creator. In the story, the human flaws of Victor are the fuel for the conflict between the two. Earthly desires, neglect, and rejection all contribute toward the eventual death of both the parent and the son, or in other words the creator and its creation. However, despite the tragic ending to the story, the themes and motives brought up by Shelley serve as a great lesson to past, present, and future generations of readers, showing that balance between curiosity, ambition, caution, and compassion is essential in the life of every human being.