Frankenstein Versus Siddhartha

Heroes play a very extensive role in literature and are judged for being heroes by the way they act and make decisions for themselves and others around them. The heroic role is characterized by Victor Frankenstein in Mary Shelley's Frankenstein. Hermann Hesse's Siddhartha is full of characters that play heroic parts, but the most obvious one is the ferryman, Vasudeva.

Throughout Frankenstein, the heroic actions of Victor Frankenstein are slowly being shown through the challenges he faces while making a decision to benefit his wellness and happiness for the sake of the world, or giving in to the monster's wishes of a mate for himself. Victor gave in to the monster and headed to England to gather materials and information to begin creating a female monster. Victor could not pull through with his promise to the monster and stops trying to create a female mate. The monster said, "If I cannot inspire love, I will cause fear!" (Shelley 104). That being said the monster tells Victor that if he does not create a female mate for him, he will create a catastrophic fallout. Victor said, "The different accidents of life are not so changeable as the feelings of human nature. I had worked hard for nearly two years, for the sole purpose of infusing life into an inanimate body, but now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished. (Shelley 56) Victor rips apart any of the information and progress he has on creating the new female monster and his life comes to an end by losing all his friends, family, and close ones. Although Victor Frankenstein could have made the decision to create the female monster and live the rest of his days with his friends and family, happy, he made a heroic decision, and that way he stood up to the monster, sacrificing his own happiness for the sake of the greater good. Frankenstein knew that in doing what he did, his life would be in danger but he made the decision to save the lives of others so that they don't have to derive the reality.

In Hermann Hesse's Siddhartha, there is a long journey leading up to the realization of who may be the true hero of the story. Siddhartha takes on some difficult decisions that involve mistakes and discovering within himself, but along his way, he met someone that showed more heroic potential in his character, Vasuveda. Once Siddhartha decided to leave town, the town wanted to get payback by corrupting him with the things he loved the most, after that, Siddhartha was at the lowest point in his life near the river he has crossed before in his lifetime. At that river, Siddhartha attempted to kill himself by drowning, rather than giving his life a second chance. Siddhartha then decides to give Vasuveda a visit and begins to tell him about how he arr9ved at the river and Vasuveda said "The river has spoken to you. It is your friend as well, it speaks to you, too." (Hesse 84) After Siddhartha and Vasuveda's conversation, Siddhartha realized that Vasuveda may be the hero after all. Vasuveda helped Siddhartha by giving him a friend and a home, rather than starving and unsheltered. They were friends for years and throughout the time, both were learning from the river and from each other. When their time together came to an end, Siddhartha felt a very strong sense of unity and finally understands and listens to the river. Vasuveda "Radiantly walked away, Siddhartha gazed after him. With deep joy, deeply earnest, he followed him with gaze.. saw his full form of light." (Hesse 107) Siddhartha had finally realized the impact that Vesuveda had on his life and how if they had never crossed paths, Siddhartha would have never fully been happy and understanding of the meaning of life and peace.

Heroes have a very great impact on stories and add a little more hope to a story. In Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein, Victor Frankenstein has trouble making peace with a monster, and in rejecting the monster's request, he put his life and happiness on the line and in danger for the safety of others. In Herman Hesse’s Siddhartha, Vasuveda helps Siddhartha find himself in the river and mentor him and give him hope to find peace in his life that he was looking for but could not be achieved alone. With heroes being a part of a storyline, readers learn to acknowledge an immense lesson, and without that, stories would not be the same.