Longing For A Connection

Humans are born with natural survival instincts, such as the need for water, food, and shelter. Although these factors are needed to survive humans also need additional factors to value the will to survive such as companionship and personal connections. In Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, first published in 1818, Dr. Victor Frankenstein tells his story about how he brought a creature to life and the aftermath of it all to a man on a ship who rescued him. Immediately after the monster was awaken by Frankenstein he experienced rejection as his creator and every other individual to come was terrified of his appearance. Through constantly being unaccepted the monster experienced loneliness and rejection, yet all he sought for was companionship and belongingness from others romantic or not.

Just like humans, the monster was longing for his basic need of companionship because a bond allows a sense of belonging, the opportunity to love and be loved by others, and most importantly the relief of not being alone. To start, the monster is not a murder by nature but by nurture. He was not born with evil tendencies, yet the built up pain of rejection and isolation he experienced from not only strangers but his creator as well led to him having malicious motives. The monster simply killed each individual on the basis that they meant something to Frankenstein and he wanted his creator to suffer from loneliness just like he had all these years. Firstly, if the monster was ever given the opportunity to experience an emotional bond with a companion it could have prevented the hurt he felt from society. Through consistently being ostracized the monster never knew what it was like to belong and coexist with others. Since the monster's basic need of companionship was denied he had no sense of belongingness therefore he had no perception of what it was like to relate, laugh, or experience happiness. As a result, the loneliness and neglect of a bond became a mental illness that was internally painful for the monster to endure.

Nurture begins to play into the monster's actions as the novel progresses and he incorporates the intentions of others into his responses in situations. For instance, besides the detrimental tactics learned from Frankenstein he also referenced literature as a source of guidance to help develop him as a person since he had no no true parental figure due to his exclusion. However, by the lack of companionship, specifically a bond, he was never taught the basic ethical values of society like that murder is prohibited. Not to excuse the actions of the monster, yet if he had the opportunity to coexist with society than he would've adapted to the morals of society. To contrast, the monster is stereotyped just as much as the villain of the novel due to his inexcusable murders and that he was aware of what he was doing in the moment. To counter, yes the monster was wrong to kill, however, he was a product of derogatory humans so by pointing him as the villain it is essentially also stating that the human species is the true villain.

Hasan explains why humans have a vital yearning to form bonds by stating, "People seek relationships with others to fulfill this fundamental need to belong" (429). The correlates back to how companionship is a basic human need for survival and through having that camaraderie one is able to mentally grow as an individual. Secondly, companionship provides the chance to experience the emotional rush to love and be loved by another. Although the monster was denied this opportunity in the novel with a female companion of the same phenotypic traits as himself it was for the greater good of humanity due to the unknown actions of a female monster.

However, if the monster was able to know the feeling of love first hand with a companion he'd potentially change his motive from teasing Frankenstein to building up himself and his new connection. All the monster was seeking was someone to love so he could positively put his energy into something for once, yet Frankenstein prevented this for considerable reasons but only after misleading the monster into hopeful happiness. In volume three of the novel Victor destroys the female monster physically and the original monster emotionally. Devastated by Victor breaking his promise the monster says, "Shall each man,' cried he, 'find a wife for his bosom, and each beast have his mate, and I be alone?" (Shelley 120). Without an outlet to put his passion into positively the monster then transfers all that energy into informing Victor of his intentions to do unto him what he did to the monster. Lastly, if the monster was given the basic need of companionship he would ultimately not be alone and be removed from the isolation he was forced into.

Social isolation and loneliness are drastically embedded all throughout the novel from Walton's unwanted seclusion to Frankenstein's intended absence from society as he does his studies. However, in both of those instances both parties had experienced or were able to access communication with others whereas the monster was not given the time to ever vocally express himself without being prejudiced against. Being denied his deserved need of companionship the monster was unaware of what happiness personally felt like; all he knew was a made up version he had created through watching others. Leibowitz explains the connection between friendship and happiness and why companionship is necessary by stating, "That the extent to which we value something can be influenced by our awareness of the value others attribute to it suggests that recognizing that others value our own lives may impact on our sense of self-worth" (101).

This correlation between companionship and happiness helps understand the characters of the novel who didn't have close bonds specifically the monster. For instance, both the monster and Walton didn't have many friends and they both expressed this form of loneliness and loss of connection between themselves and the outside world. All in all, if the monster was exposed to honest companionship within the novel instead of rejection and banishment from society the monster would have had clarity when making decisions, yet his mind was infected and filled with negativity and pain since his awakening allowing him to become malicious and spiteful. Towards the end of the novel the monster is filled with such heartache and cloudiness that he begins to see not society and Victor as the issue yet himself as the root of the problem. The monster goes on to say, "I shall die. I shall no longer feel the agonies which now consume me, or be the prey of feelings unsatisfied, yet unquenched" (Shelley 161). These emotions and self-harming thoughts overwhelmed the monster due to his lack of companionship to help communicate his issues with, yet since he lacked the company of another he was left to internalize all this hurt. The monster plus a companion would blossom into an individual who is capable of coexisting, loving, and having company all if he was given the basic human need of companionship.