



# Mysticism and Alienation : A Critical Analysis of Mary Shelly Novel' Frankenstein

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## ABSTRACT

*This paper intends to explore alienation in Mary Shelley's Frankenstein will deal with a few elements of one of the best-selling books ever written by a woman, the novel Frankenstein: or, the Modern Prometheus (first published 1818) by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (1797-1851). Firstly, the paper will deal with the definition of the word monster as well as the concept of a monster and who exactly represents the monster in the novel Frankenstein. It will try to depict the monster as the result of one man's work that cannot find love so it spreads evil. However, the paper will also emphasise that the word monster not only refers to the product of Victor Frankenstein's work but also to Victor himself. The study will also show the influence of the development in the field of science in Mary Shelley's Frankenstein. Secondly, another point that will be discussed in the paper is the meaning of the Alienation. The aim of this study is to define what kind of monstrosity is represented by the characters in Mary Shelley's novel, as well how their role is put forward in the novel.*

**Keywords:** Mary Shelley, Frankenstein, creation, morality, responsibility, ethics, AI development, humanization, accountability, knowledge-seeking

Mary Shelley's Gothic novel, Frankenstein, asks questions regarding science, nature and divinity against a backdrop of a rapidly changing society of the Industrial Revolution. In her consideration of the changes of morals, values and living conditions, she warns of the potential consequences of personal ambition and advocates for the retainment of Romantic ideals within society. Having a rather unfortunate childhood, Shelley's writing reflects part of the adversities that she has faced. Isolation is an idea that is explored diversely. Shelley portrays isolation as a craving of Frankenstein, to highlight his excessive ambition and its consequences. Isolation is also presented as a form of suffering, which emphasises the importance of company in the form of Romanticism. The theme of isolation also signifies the similarities between Frankenstein and his creation, which ties into the idea of a duality. It is in these ways that Shelley explores the idea of isolation.

Isolation is initially seen as a self-imposed state by Frankenstein. His desire to be alone to contemplate his scientific passions or his destined destruction portray isolation as a catalyst for ambition and its consequences. Frankenstein's isolation from his family starves him from the "kindness and indulgence" of his family, allowing his "ardent desires" to evolve. Ultimately, this isolation enables him to shun his "fellow creatures" and work like "one doomed by slavery". Thus, isolation is seen as a feature which extracts the factors that suppress ambition. Frankenstein's desire for isolation is later seen when he suffers psychologically from the creation of his creature and its actions. The scientist seeks for nature when in need of comfort. He often rests by "placid" and "calm" waters, or "heavenly scenes" which allow him to restore his frame of mind. Frankenstein seeks this form of isolation over the company of others, which not only reveals Frankenstein's character, but also the important of nature. Frankenstein can be seen as a self-centred character but Shelley is trying to explain more that this. Shelley conveys that nature is essential for providing

comfort, through Victor's sought-after isolation. Frankenstein's desire for isolation also highlights the serious consequences of his actions. His overt attachment to nature could signify a rising madness within him, but it also points out how much Frankenstein has suffered. His deep contemplations of "unparalleled sufferings" while alone show the great extent to which the once-aspiring scientist has fallen. Thus, Shelley writes of isolation as a desirable attribute which highlights the excess of ambition and its consequences.

Shelley also explores the theme of isolation as a harmful trait, clearly shown through the creature's perspective. She alludes to the importance of women's roles in society, through the creature's lack of and urge for a female partner. The creature expresses the pain he feels from having "no relation or friend upon Earth". His "feelings of affection" for a potential female partner are torn apart by his creator, which leads the creature to be full of "detestation and scorn". Here, Shelley tries to communicate that the creature's isolation and vengeful character is due to his lack of a female partner. As the feminine figure is linked well to "Mother nature" in the way that both provide care and compassion, both these aspects can be seen as products of Romanticism. Thus, in Mary Shelley's era, when Enlightened ordeals were developing rapidly, Shelley attempts to signify the importance of women and nature in maintaining balance in the equilibrium between Enlightenment and Romanticism. Therefore, Shelley explores the creature's suffering in isolation by examining the causes of isolation, and she insinuates/posits that these missing features in the novel are maintained in her own society.

The duality between Frankenstein and his creation is marked by their common isolation. Both of them are treated as exiles, and this suggests that both of the characters are similar. Shelley employs the concept of isolation to emphasise that people are a dichotomy of good and bad. The creature is created by Frankenstein while he is in isolation. This implies that one of the factors, or materials needed for the creature's existence is isolation. The creature is a cause of isolation, and an isolated figure rejected by humanity. He considers himself "abandoned", not only by humanity but also by the heavens when he calls himself a "fallen angel". This idea of being cast away from a divine presence is also seen in Frankenstein. He too calls himself a falling angel for creating a corrupted creature. Thus, this similarity between the two hints that they share a connection between them. Overall, Shelley uses isolation to convey several ideas. Her depicts isolation as a catalyst for ambition, but also uses the theme to highlight the consequences of such desires. The creature's suffering caused by isolation emphasises the importance in the role of women and the need for keeping Romantic elements in society. Furthermore, the common isolation that Frankenstein and the creature share brings out Shelley's message that the two beings may be more interdependent than at initial observations. Both, ultimately, are suffer worse experiences because of their isolation – the central theme of the novel.

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