



Introduction

Mary Shelley's gothic novel, *Frankenstein*, explores themes of creation, ambition, and the consequences of playing God. At the center of this haunting tale is the mysterious death of William Frankenstein, Victor Frankenstein's young brother. The question that lingers throughout the narrative is: who killed William? Was it a vengeful creature brought to life by Victor himself or some other force at play? In order to unravel this enigma, we must delve into the intricate web of relationships and events surrounding William's demise in order to understand how this tragedy unfolds. By examining key characters and their motivations within the context of Shelley's atmospheric setting, we can begin to uncover who may be responsible for the untimely death of William Frankenstein.

In her novel, Mary Shelley masterfully creates an eerie atmosphere through vivid descriptions of settings such as Geneva and Ingolstadt. These dark and foreboding landscapes serve as a backdrop for both human drama and supernatural occurrences. Shelley uses these settings not only to evoke fear but also to mirror internal turmoil experienced by various characters in the story. As we explore potential suspects in William's murder case – including Victor Frankenstein himself or his monstrous creation – understanding how these individuals are shaped by their surroundings becomes crucial in our quest for answers.

The complex relationships between characters also contribute significantly to our investigation into who killed William. Family dynamics play a significant role throughout *Frankenstein* - from Victor's close bond with Elizabeth Lavenza (his cousin turned wife) to his strained relationship with his father Alphonse. Each character has their own motives that could potentially lead them towards committing such a heinous crime against an innocent child like William.

Through analyzing both setting and characterization within Mary Shelley's iconic novel *Frankenstein* we hope discover clues that will help us uncover who exactly was responsible for killing young William Frankenstein

Victor Frankenstein: The Creator and his Responsibility

Victor's initial ambition to conquer death through science blinds him to the potential consequences of his actions. His obsession with unlocking the secrets of life leads him down a dangerous path where he disregards ethical considerations in favor of achieving his own desires. In creating such an abomination, Victor fails to consider how his creature might interact with society or how it may crave companionship and acceptance.

When faced with the repercussions of bringing this being into existence, Victor shirks all responsibility for its actions rather than attempting to control or guide it towards good intentions. Instead, he recoils in horror at what he has done and abandons his creation out of fear and disgust.

While other factors may have contributed to William's death in *Frankenstein* – including external forces or other characters' motivations – it is undeniable that Victor Frankenstein bears significant responsibility for unleashing such a dangerous force upon society without providing guidance or support. His negligence as a creator leads not only to tragedy but also raises questions about moral accountability and our responsibilities towards those we bring into existence.

The Creature: A Product of Neglect and Rejection

Driven by a deep yearning for companionship and acceptance, the creature's encounter with William may have been an attempt to establish a connection with another human being. When he realizes that William is related to his creator Victor Frankenstein, feelings of anger and vengeance consume him. The rejection he has experienced from society as well as from Victor himself fuels his desire for revenge against those who have caused him so much pain.

While it can be argued that the creature ultimately bears responsibility for his own actions in causing harm to William, it is important to recognize that his violent tendencies are born out of years of mistreatment and abandonment. He seeks retribution not only against Victor but also against society as a whole for their collective rejection.

In examining the role played by the neglected and rejected creature in William's death, we must consider how societal attitudes towards difference contribute to acts of violence. The creature represents an embodiment of otherness – both physically and emotionally – which provokes fear within those who encounter him. This fear ultimately leads to tragic consequences not only for William but also for all those who come into contact with this tormented creation.

While there may be multiple factors at play in determining who killed William Frankenstein in Mary Shelley's novel Frankenstein - including external forces or other characters' motivations - it is undeniable that neglectful parenting on behalf of Victor Frankenstein coupled with societal rejection plays a significant role in unleashing such tragedy upon innocent victims like young William.

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Society: Its Influence on William's Fate

Society, with its prejudices and biases, plays a pivotal role in shaping William's fate in Frankenstein. The novel portrays a society that fears the unknown and rejects anything or anyone deemed different. William's death can be seen as a direct result of this societal fear and intolerance.

As a member of the privileged upper class, William enjoys certain privileges and protections. His encounter with the creature exposes the dark underbelly of society's treatment towards those who do not fit within predetermined norms. Society's rejection of the creature forces him to seek revenge on innocent individuals like William, who feels isolated and marginalized.

Societal expectations regarding gender roles also contribute to William's tragic demise. The male-dominated society expects men to embody strength and courage, leaving little room for vulnerability or emotional expression. This toxic masculinity prevents young boys like William from seeking help or expressing their fears openly, leading to devastating consequences.

In examining the influence of society on William's fate, we must confront uncomfortable truths about our own complicity in perpetuating harmful stereotypes and prejudices. It is through introspection and challenging these societal constructs that we can begin to prevent further tragedies like that which befell young William Frankenstein.

Justine Moritz: Accused but Innocent?

In light of these factors, it becomes evident that while Justine Moritz may have been wrongfully accused of William's murder in *Frankenstein*, she serves as a tragic example of how easily innocent individuals can become victims when societal pressures dictate otherwise.

It is essential to consider how society plays its part in creating circumstances where individuals like Justine are vulnerable targets for accusations without substantial evidence or motive. The wrongful accusation levied against her sheds light on larger issues within society regarding class prejudice and scapegoating.

While the true killer of young William remains elusive throughout Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* novel, it becomes clear that placing blame solely on one individual fails to address deeper societal flaws that contribute to such tragedies occurring in the first place.

Nature vs Nurture: The Role of Genetics in William's Death

The question of nature versus nurture is a recurring theme in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, and it raises important considerations when examining the death of William. While Victor Frankenstein may have created the creature and imbued him with certain physical characteristics, it is essential to explore whether genetics alone can be held responsible for his violent actions. The creature's disposition towards aggression could potentially be attributed to a combination of genetic factors inherited from Victor as well as the environment in which he was raised.

Although the creature possesses physical strength and an imposing appearance, it is crucial to recognize that these traits alone do not determine one's propensity for violence. It is through his experiences of rejection, neglect, and isolation that the creature develops a deep-seated anger and resentment towards humanity. These environmental factors play a significant role in shaping his behavior and ultimately contribute to the tragic events surrounding William's death.

By exploring other characters in *Frankenstein* who possess similar genetic makeup – such as Victor himself or even William – we can begin to question whether their upbringing or life experiences played a role in shaping their character as well. This highlights the complex interplay between nature and nurture in determining an individual's actions.

While genetics may provide some insight into understanding why the creature behaves as he does, it is important not to overlook the powerful influence of environmental factors on human behavior. The death of William brings attention not only to questions about responsibility but also prompts us to consider how both nature and nurture interact within individuals' lives.

While genetics undoubtedly contribute to an individual's predisposition towards certain behaviors or characteristics, it would be oversimplifying matters to solely attribute William's death solely to this factor. Instead, we must acknowledge that both nature (genetics) and nurture (environment) play pivotal roles in shaping an individual's actions - including those leading up to tragic events like William's untimely demise.

Conclusion

The death of William Frankenstein in Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein* is not the sole responsibility of one individual, but rather a result of collective actions and negligence. While Victor Frankenstein can be held accountable for his role as the creator who abandoned his creation, we must also consider the societal rejection and fear that pushed the creature towards vengeance. The tragedy highlights larger themes surrounding the consequences of ambition and playing God, as well as society's treatment of those who are different or deemed monstrous.

It raises important questions about our moral responsibilities towards both our creations and fellow human beings. Victor's disregard for ethical considerations in his pursuit of scientific knowledge illustrates how

unchecked ambition can have devastating consequences. Similarly, society's rejection and fear-based prejudices against those perceived as outsiders contribute to a cycle of violence and despair.

Understanding who killed William requires an examination of multiple factors: Victor's neglectful parenting, the creature's desire for revenge stemming from years of mistreatment and abandonment, and society's refusal to accept what does not fit within its narrow definition of normalcy. By examining these interconnected elements within Shelley's atmospheric setting, we begin to grasp the collective responsibility shared by all parties involved in this tragic tale.

As readers reflect upon this timeless story filled with complex characters navigating their own desires and fears, we are reminded that true accountability cannot be placed on one individual alone but lies within a web woven by both personal choices and societal structures. Only by acknowledging our collective responsibility can we hope to prevent further tragedies like that which befell young William Frankenstein in Mary Shelley's haunting masterpiece.

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