

The creature's childhood

Blank slate

Innocent

'A poor helpless miserable wretch'

Tries to imitate the sounds of the birds- nature connection. He is learning very quickly because he has to in order to survive.

The creature isn't trying to emotionally bribe us. There is no self pity- he's merely reciting what happened to him. All he feels is self-loathing. He's been told he's a wretch so often that he now believes it.

He discovers his own senses. He's very appreciative of nature. 'I gazed with a kind of wonder'

He's not making you pity him

He has very human needs which are not met at all

He shows great wonder at simple things

The creature doesn't fight back or feel any anger towards his attackers.

He's easily pleased because he hasn't experienced much good at all.

The creature observes the DeLacey family. The family is like his parents as they educate him.

They live a simple life which teaches him not to expect too much. The family gets by with love and support.

The creature learns that teamwork is efficient by watching the family working as a team to survive.

The creature learns that reading and writing is the same as spoken language.

When the creature sees himself in a reflection he gets a sense of horror, and believes that he is different. He's not feeling resentment about this yet.

The creature learns about the seasons and appreciates the opening of spring from winter.

Spring is lovely and has a good effect on people- it has a regenerating effect on people.

When Safie arrives, the creature learns the language better as the family breaks down and teaches her the language.

The creature learns about the power of human love and the positive effects of it.

The books the creature discovers

Paradise lost by John Milton. (Satan's fall from heaven- a battle between God and rebels).

Creature mistakenly thinks this is a true factual account. Satan falls and is condemned to hell.

Themes: obedience to God is important, hierarchical nature of the universe, light and dark (good and evil) conservation and contemplation- conserve the garden of eden, contemplate God's grace. Don't meddle with nature, as Victor does. He turns against God.

Sorrows of Young Werther by Johann Goethe.

Werther is obsessed with possessing a woman he has intense feelings for. He eventually kills himself in despair Werther's love for Lottie is presented dramatically.

Themes: He is suicidal- gives the creature the idea for his eventual suicide?

His love life is virtually non-existent. He has no real love (sexually either) towards anyone.

Henry

'Restores' Victor from illness

Demonstrates the capacity for wonder and delight. Henry is allied to nature, he enjoys it and restores Victor.

V talks about Henry in a similar way to women.

'A being formed in the very poetry of nature'

'Sensibility of his heart'

These may be to tip our sympathies to make us more sad when Henry is killed

Victor's relationships with people

His father- He tries to be a good dad, seeks Victor's happiness.

When the father arranges for Clerval to accompany Victor it interferes with Victor's solitude. He has good intentions, but does interfere with some of Victor's plans and desires an early marriage with Victor and Elizabeth.

He does care, but he seems more authority driven than love driven. This could be a reflection of William Godwin, Shelley's father.

Elizabeth- 'Alas, to me, the idea of an immediate union with my Elizabeth was one of horror and dismay'. Elizabeth seems more like Victor's sister which is confusing.

'I was bound by a solemn promise' He is uncomfortable with it.

'I might claim Elizabeth'- he has power over her that he doesn't have over men- she is a prize.

'Enfranchised from my miserable slavery'- his incapacity to love or maybe homosexuality?

Wild landscapes in the novel

The landscapes get increasingly wild as the book progresses- could represent how everything spins out of control?

A journey north/ a journey towards coldness?

As all the characters drop off one by one he goes to a more isolated environment. Symbolically, he moves himself away from humanity. The harsh landscape is very extreme and survival is difficult.

In Victor's pursuit for revenge, the landscape becomes more bleak because he is only focusing on the creature, not anything else. Represents his single-mindedness?

Shifts in emotion/sensibility- About balance- you need to have everything in moderation.

Extreme reactions to things are common. Are we meant to see Victor's shifts in emotion as ridiculous? It's definitely self indulgent.

Extremity

Extreme beauty

Extreme knowledge

Arguing against knowledge is power