

hands of the Monster is William, Victor Frankenstein's younger brother. Blinded by prejudice, the young boy brands the Monster an "ogre," a notion of which could be understandable once confronted by a creature of "gigantic stature" and "supernatural speed." However, as he fights to escape the Monster's grip, he "grasped his throat to silence him," thus killing an innocent child. However, it is the Monster's reaction to his crimes that makes his acts even more chilling – after the death of William, he felt a wave of "hellish triumph" overcome him, and similarly "seemed to jeer" after the death of Elizabeth. Whilst the act of murder is a sin, no matter what era it was written in, a lack of remorse could also be accounted as a sin, especially in a religious context. Some Christians believe in the idea that to admit to your wrongdoings and repent yourself of your failures, wipes clean your sins in the eyes of God. Though the Monster unforgivably killed, he equally did not appear to feel any remorse over his grotesque acts through his "jeer[ing]" response. Whilst the Monster dies, he dies on his own accord, as he exclaims "I shall ascend my funeral pile triumphantly." Through the lexical choice of "triumphantly," it can be inferred that he relishes his chance to die when he pleases, as opposed to receive any form of punishment for his crimes. Furthermore, from the adjective of "triumphantly" juxtaposing the scenario of death, it can also be inferred that the Monster views his own death not as a punishment, but as a form of release. This demeanour contrasts Victor's own demise as he "shall no longer feel the agonies which now consume me," suggesting that he feels guilty for unleashing the Monster upon the world. In a sense, the crimes committed by the Monster can be traced back to Victor's unlawful creation of life. Just as the epitaph of the novel, an allusion to Milton's *Paradise Lost* surmises – 'Did I request thee maker, from my clay to mould me man?' – the Monster did not ask to be created, it happened at the hands of Victor, who was playing God. This in itself could be regarded as a sin, especially in a religious society such as the one Shelley was writing in, and was, indeed, regarded as a sin in the Bible, as shown through the story of Prometheus, of whom the subtitle of the novel alludes to. From Prometheus' creation of man, he was thus punished by the Gods through means of torture – his liver would be pecked out by a bird, but since he was immortal, it would recur every day. Similarly, Victor's "agonies" recur since the creation of the Monster and subsequent mental deterioration, although it is apparent that his torture is a mental one as opposed to a physical one. Like the Monster, Victor is not directly punished as a result of his sins, so it can be said that his death is, instead, a form of liberation and release.

To conclude, I agree to a certain extent that, in Gothic writing, death is the punishment for sin. In Webster's *The White Devil*, akin to Carter's *The Bloody Chamber*, the value of karma is reinstated; in the latter, the Marquis died at the hands of a woman for his own torture and maltreatment of women, and in the former, those who kill are eventually killed themselves. However, it can be disputed that death is not always a punishment, as the young girl within Carter's *The Snow Child*, who is defiled whilst her abuser walks free, is an innocent victim. Within Shelley's *Frankenstein*, also, the majority of the Monster's victims are innocent people, whilst it can be argued that the death of both Victor and the Monster is not necessarily the punishment for their sins, more than it is a form of freedom.