**2016 Prompt**

**Many works of literature contain a character who intentionally deceives others. The character’s dishonesty may be intended either to help or to hurt. Such a character, for example, may choose to mislead others for personal safety, to spare someone’s feelings, or to carry out a crime.**

**Choose a novel or play in which a character deceives others. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze the motives for that character’s deception and discuss how the deception contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize.**

Here is my lead in and thesis statement:

Mary Shelley’s title character in *Frankenstein* brings to life a human-like creature supposedly to cure all diseases but mostly to make a name for himself. Because of Frankenstein’s immense need for glory and later his guilt, he deceives loved ones he should have protected, which presents the notion that extreme egotism leads to destruction.

When you create a map for an in-class essay, you will not usually have quotes. I have created a map that might be used such an essay. But since you are preparing this time to write an essay where you have access to the book, your map will include quotes.

**The early signs of ego**

**1. Several situations suggest Frankenstein’s overly inflated ego.**

Show up college professor who embarrassed him

Pretends to be selfless, favoring fame over monitory reward, which he does not need

Pretends to have a noble goal, creating life to cure all disease but has no real plan for this

Wants a huge creature—science of sideshow

Rejects monster because he is ugly

Victor’s flimsy fealty to his own creation demonstrates selfish motives.

**Justine**

**2. Fear of public opinion continues to secure Frankenstein’s lie of omission.**

Only Victor understands the ungodly likelihood that his creation orchestrated this evil.

Despite Frankenstein’s devotion to his cousin Justine, his fails to take appropriate action to help her.

When Justine accepts her fate but wants assurance that her benefactors believe her to be innocent, he remains silent.

Elizabeth risks public ridicule to defend Justine, yet Frankenstein comes forward too late and ekes out mere generalities.

**Clerval**

**3. Despite his condescending affection for Clerval, Frankenstein does not trust him with a truth that might save his life. [I have not finished flushing out the details of this subtopic section, yet.]**

**Elizabeth**

**4. Victor takes an unfair advantage of Elizabeth** by marrying her without divulging the risk.

He has no right to marry Elizabeth without a full disclosure of the danger she will face while the monster plagues him with hellish atonement.

Delusional in his sense of self-importance, he expects to be the target of the monster’s violence.

His ego leads to making decisions for Elizabeth that she should make for herself. He leaves her alone and defenseless, a sacrificial lamb on the ignorant altar of his lost cause.

This paragraph exemplifies a flow of writing that became too large. I made the line spacing 1½ in order to keep the text all on one page. The next page shows how to create a second paragraph put of this large one.

 Fear of public opinion continues to secure Frankenstein’s lie of omission. The monster kills William and frames Justine by leaving William’s locket in her possession while she sleeps. This piece of circumstantial evidence, which Justine cannot account for, seals her fate. With the last bit of hope, Justine asks for character witnesses. Unfortunately, the gruesome nature of the crime renders silent those who would normally speak well of her. Brave Elizabeth takes the stand, despite how “indecent” people might consider this act. She insists, “[W]hen I see a fellow creature about to perish through the cowardice of her pretended friends, I wish to be allowed to speak” (71). Victor’s larger and more disgraceful “cowardice” becomes clear as he flees the courtroom “in agony,” rationalizing that “the tortures of the accused did not equal” his own since “she was sustained by innocence” while “the fangs of remorse tore [his] bosom and would not forgo their hold” (72). Poor Justine suffers the monster’s revenge for the “agony” caused him by Victor’s abandonment. Justine’s innocence does not protect her from physical pain and horrifying fear. It does not restore her future. Victor’s ego dares to discount Justine’s plight in favor of his supposedly greater torment. He has the right to wish for his own peaceful death. He has no right to assuage his guilt through hers. Furthermore, Victor’s reference to “fangs of remorse” alludes to the devil in the Garden of Eden, taking the form of a snake to tempt Eve with forbidden knowledge. As Adam and Eve try to gain God’s knowledge and, therefore, power, God expels them from their blissful garden. Victor’s similar attempt to gain inappropriate knowledge sets in motion a series of grisly murders. The snake’s fangs may refuse to “forgo their hold” but Frankenstein seems especially ineffective in attempting their extrication. Similarly, his late and useless “passionate and indignant appeals” on Justine’s behalf apparently follow a confession that had been harassed out of Justine and the verdict. She does not need his passion; her plight could be aided by the truth. Victor owes her even the slightest chance of rescue. And despite the horror of Justine’s death and Elizabeth’s debilitating grief, he refuses to tell the truth lest he be deemed crazy and still not be able to free Justine. Victor’s pride prevents him from taking a morally sound risk.

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