I'm not a robot

Chapter 9: Victor is tormented by the false calm that descends upon the Frankenstein household following the death of Justine. He is wracked with guilt; though he intended to further the cause of human happiness, he has ended in committing "deeds of mischief beyond description horrible." Victor's health suffers as a result of his massive sense of guilt and the bleak depression that accompanies it. His father, observing his misery, becomes ill as well. The Frankenstein family, "blasted" as a result of their recent misfortunes, retires to their summer home at Belrive. There, Victor passes most of his hours in solitude; the fact that he must keep his role in William's death a secret makes the company of his family agonizing to him. He finds himself in extreme disharmony with the landscape of Belrive, which impresses him with its beauty and serenity. He often contemplates suicide, but is deterred by thoughts of Elizabeth's grief; he also fears the untold havoc his creature could wreak in his absence. Victor's hatred of the creature reaches pathological proportions, and takes on the character of an obsession; he thinks of nothing but his eventual revenge. Elizabeth, too, is much changed by the tragedy; she has lost faith in the essential goodness of both humanity and the world as a whole. Now, men appear to her "as monsters thirsting after each other's blood." She does, however, persist in her fervent belief in Justine's innocence; she feels great pity for the man who must carry the guilt for William's murder on his conscience. Victor despairs when he hears her say this, as he feels that he is the man who must bear that guilt. He seeks escape from his misery by traveling through the Alpine valley of Chamonix, in which he had often vacationed as a boy. Victor is awestruck by the overwhelming grandeur of the landscape, and views it as proof of the existence of an omnipotent god. The hard physical exercise exhausts him, and he is able to take refuge in sleep for the first time since the execution of Justine. Analysis: The reader cannot help but feel a certain ambivalence toward Victor's thoughts of suicide: while they reveal the magnitude and authenticity of his feelings of remorse, they also bespeak a certain selfishness. That he overcomes his desire to kill himself indicates that he is capable of mastering his self-absorption, at least occasionally: his concern for his family, and for the suffering that the creature could cause humanity as a whole, keeps him from the "base desertion" of suicide. In this chapter, we see the dramatic effect that nature has upon Victor's well-being and state of mind. He praises nature for what he calls its sublimity that is, for the way in which it stands beyond the scope of human control and comprehension. This awestruck admiration is bitterly ironic, in light of the fact that Frankenstein's agony was originally caused by his desire to master nature and unlock its secrets. Nature, for Frankenstein, reveals the existence of an all-powerful god the very god whose works he attempted to improve upon and replace. Elizabeth's apprehension of men as bloodthirsty monsters is quite significant: it highlights the ambiguous moral status of both Frankenstein and his creature. Who, Shelley insistently asks, is the true monster? Is it the creature that Victor abandoned? Or is it Victor himself, who obsessively fantasizes about taking his violent revenge upon the monster he himself created? Chapter 10: Victor continues to wander aimlessly in the valley of Chamonix, taking great consolation in the magnificence of the natural landscape. At the same time, he notes that the landscape is characterized by disorder and destruction: constant avalanches plague the valley, and it often seems that the mountains themselves will crash down on Victor's head. Victor determines to climb to the top of Montanvert, one of the region's forbiddingly massive glaciers. The sight of the mountain fills him with a "sublime ecstasy"; he believes that human contemplation of natural wonders "gives wings to the soul and allows it to soar from the obscure world to light and joy." He is filled with melancholy as he ascends the mountain, however, and, amid rain and rockslides, meditates on the impermanence of all human dreams and attachments. When he has reached the summit, Victor invokes all the "wandering spirits" of the dead, and asks them to either permit him to be happy or carry him to his grave. As if summoned by this call, the monster appears. Victor rains curses upon him and threatens to kill him, but the creature remains unmoved. He says that he is the most wretched and despised of all living things, and accuses his creator of a gross disregard for the sanctity of life: how else could Victor propose to murder a creature which owes its existence to him? The monster asks Frankenstein to alleviate his misery, and threatens to "glut the maw of death… with the blood of [Victor's] remaining friends" if he does not comply with his wishes. The monster eloquently argues that he is intrinsically good, full of love and humanity; only the greatness of his suffering has driven him to commit acts of evil. Though he is surrounded by examples of human happiness, he finds himself excluded, through no fault of his own, irrevocably excluded from such bliss. He implores Frankenstein to listen to his story; only then should he decide whether or not to relieve the creature of his agony. Analysis: Victor's sojourn in the valley of Chamonix reveals his desire to escape the guilt he bears for the recent tragedies. There, he seeks oblivion in sleep, and in the bleakness of the glacial landscape. The chaos of that landscape, in which avalanches and rockslides are a constant threat, suggests that Victor's escape from his responsibility will be short-lived; it also foreshadows further tragedy. The encounter between Victor and his creature is charged with Biblical allusions: like God and Adam, the creature's creator has cast him out. For him, Frankenstein occupies the position of the Christian god. The creature is also subtly aligned with the figure of Satan, or the devil: like him, he is a "fallen angel," grown brute and vicious in the absence of his god. Shelley suggests that the creature's misdeeds are caused by the enormity of his suffering; at heart, he is essentially good and, more importantly, essentially human. If he is monstrous, no one but Frankenstein is to blame. When the outraged creature demands of his creator an answer to the question "How dare you sport thus with life?", the sentiments of the reader manifest. Frankenstein, in his hypocrisy, longs to murder a being that owes its life to him. If the creature is, paradoxically, both inherently good and capable of evil, then his creator is as well. Chapter 11: The creature has only the most vague memory of his early life: he recalls being assailed with sensory impressions, and was for a long time unable to distinguish among light, sound, and smell. He began to wander, but found the heat and sunlight of the countryside oppressive; he eventually took refuge in the forest near Ingolstadt, which offered him shade. The creature found himself tormented by hunger, thirst, and bodily pain. Only the light of the moon consoled him, and he grew to love the sound of birdsong. When he attempted to imitate it, however, he found the sound of his own voice terrifying, and fell silent again. With the same ecstatic astonishment that primitive man must have felt, the creature discovers fire. All of the people that the creature encounters in his travels regard him with horror: he is often pelted with stones and beaten with sticks, though he attempts to make overtures of friendship. He finally comes upon a miserable hovel; this is attached to a cottage of poor but respectable appearance. Exhausted, he takes refuge there "from the inclemency of the weather and from… the barbarity of man." The creature, in observing the cottage's three inhabitants, contrives a great affection for the beauty and nobility of their faces. They an old man, a young man, and a young woman enthrall him with the sound of their music and the cadence of their language, which he adores but cannot understand. Analysis: This chapter is told from the creature's point of view. In this way, Shelley humanizes the creature: his first-person narration reveals him as a character of surprising depth and sensitivity. The reader becomes familiar with his trials and sufferings; we realize that, at the time of Frankenstein's abandonment, the creature was as innocent and defenseless as a human infant. Like an infant, he is plagued by blurry vision, confusion of the senses, and an aversion to direct light: he experiences the world precisely as a young child would experience it. His syntax, as he begins describing his early life, is almost painfully simple. He is as yet incapable of interpreting or analyzing the world and his perceptions of it. The creature's narrative voice is surprisingly gentle and utterly guileless: one of the most poignant moments in the novel is when the creature, despised by Victor and feared by the rest of mankind, collapses and weeps out of fear and pain. In all of his encounters with humanity, the creature is met with horror and disgust. In the face of such cruelty, the reader cannot help but share the creature's fury and resentment: though he means no harm, his unbeautiful appearance is enough to make him a wretched outcast. He is, through no fault of his own, deprived of all hope of love and companionship; the reader thus slowly begins to sympathize with his desire to revenge himself on both his creator and on brutal humanity as a whole. As the novel progresses, we become more and more uncertain as to who is truly human, since the creature's first-person narration reveals both his own humanity and his creator's concealed monstrousness. Chapter 12: The creature begins by recalling his deep and tormenting desire to speak to the cottagers, who impress him with their gentleness and simplicity. He hesitates, however, as he is fearful of incurring the same kind of disgust and cruelty that he experienced at the hands of the villagers. In observing the family, he discovers that they suffer from great poverty. The two young people are very generous with the old man, and often go hungry so that he might eat. The creature, greatly touched by this, ceases to take from their store of food, even though he is terribly hungry himself. He begins to cut their firewood for them, so that the young man, whose name is Felix, will no longer have to. The creature spends the entire winter watching the cottagers, and grows to love each of them passionately. He attempts to learn their language, which he regards as "a godlike science." At first, he makes little progress. Every act of the cottagers, however banal, strikes him as miraculous: to watch them read aloud, or play music, or simply speak to one another, delights him immeasurably. Though he realizes that they are terribly unhappy, he cannot understand why: to him, the family seems to possess everything one could want: a roof, a fire, and the glories of human companionship. Upon seeing his own reflection in a pool of water, the creature becomes even more certain that he will never know such happiness; he finds his own face to be monstrous, capable of inspiring only fear or disgust. Nonetheless, he dreams of winning the love of the cottagers by mastering their language; in this way, he hopes, he can reveal to them the beauty and gentleness of his soul. Analysis: This chapter details the creature's deep longing to join human society. He is, at first, utterly ignorant of the ways of humanity, and must learn everything from scratch. In essence, he is still a child, with all of a child's innocence and capacity for wonder. To him, the cottagers are god-like, blessed, despite the extreme humbleness of their existence. In comparing himself to them, the creature feels himself to be a monster: he is shocked by his own reflection, and is nearly unable to accept it as his own. At the same time, he still dreams of acceptance into human society, and attempts to master language in order to inspire the family's affection and trust. The reader cannot help but pity the creature, and fear for him: we know too well that human society obstinately refuses to accept those who are different, regardless of the beauty of their souls. At chapter's end, the reader can only wait uneasily for the moment when the creature will present himself to his beloved family. Summary of Chapter 9In chapter 9 Frankenstein deals with the great agony and guilt of which is responsible for the death of the innocent Justine. Frankenstein feels confused and depressed, unsure of his great fails. He cannot seem to forgive himself for letting that poor woman dying on his creations behalf. However, a most motivating talk with his father changes Frankensteins mood, and forces him to try and move on. To do this Frankenstein needs to escape the world reminding hims so much of his wretched mistakes. So he heads on a long journey, a hike through the Swiss alps to calm his doubts and tone his discouragement. The hike takes Frankenstein through incredible mountain scenery such as Mount. Blanc, and ends him in the town of Chamonix. Summary of Chapter 10As he almost reaches his journey’s destination, Frankenstein sees and encounters with the most incredible and frightful monster, the monster of his own creation. Frankenstein was hiking as usual when he saw his unmistakable monster. He had seen it once before in mountainous territory, but this time the monster was heading towards him. There wasn’t time for Frankenstein to escape a predictable unpleasant acquaintance with the monster, so he just accepted his approach. When the monster arrived Frankenstein fell furious, yelling at the monster for all the crimes and injustices he had performed. The monster merely brushed this off, complaining back of his misfortune after Frankenstein had left him in. He exploded of the most injustice deed of leaving one’s own creation to suffer, and guilt tripped Frankenstein in the role of true dishonor. Frankenstein did his best to deny such statements, but the threats from the Monster explaining danger for Frankensteins loved ones forced Frankenstein to listen. The monster explained of his desire for a good life, and that if Frankenstein could offer him such a life, he would be eternally grateful and generous. However, if Frankenstein was to vanish again, the monster would forget all justice and become a true villain. This convinces Frankenstein to accept the monster’s offer, and follows him to a cabin where the monster is to explain his life with an absent father. chapters 1 Frankenstein 1-4 - Summary 2 Frankenstein 5-8 - Summary 3 Frankenstein Letters 1-4 - Summary 4 Frankenstein 9-12 - Summary Chapter 9 shows the aftermath of Justine's trial. Victor continues to be haunted by guilt, and the feeling that he is responsible for her death. Victor's father, Alphonse, attempts to comfort his children by taking them on a family vacation to Belrive, Switzerland. While there, Victor wanders by himself toward the valley of Chamounix. Taking in the beautiful natural scenery, he finds some temporary reprieve from his depression. This idea is of seeking comfort from nature is a very common idea in Romantic literature. The Romantic period came about as a reaction against the Industrial Revolution, a time during which people were moving to cities and investing in technology. Writers in this movement sought to move away from growing cities, and they believed strongly in the healing power of nature. Soon after he experiences temporarily lifted spirits, however, Victor sinks back into depression. He again seeks refuge in nature, journeying to the top of Montanvert, a mountain on the Swiss Alps. At the top of the mountain, he starts to feel better again…until he sees the monster coming toward him across a glacier on the lake below. The monster approaches and Victor threatens him. Howeyer, the creature begins to speak-quite eloquently for a monster-and invites Victor a cave. Basically, the monster wants to share a fire with Victor and tell him his life story. Reluctantly, Victor agrees to accompany him. The monster then begins to tell the story of his life, starting when he first woke up after his creation. At first, the monster was confused. However, he came to understand the world through his senses: recognizing light and dark, hot and cold, hunger and thirst. There is no clear description about how exactly he left Victor's apartment and ended up in the Swiss Alps. Presumably, he wandered around for a time, unaware of his surroundings. The monster describes how he one day discovered fire, realizing he could use it for warmth and cooking food. Eventually, the monster roams the countryside to various villages; however, each time he goes into a village, people flee from him because of his hideous appearance. One night, he seeks refuge in an abandoned hovel. From this location, he watches a family who lives nearby. The family consists of a young man, a young woman, and an old man. For a long time, the monster observes these people. As he watches, he eventually picks up their language, learning the young man is called Felix, and the woman is Agatha; with their blind father, they make up the De Lacey family. He begins to notice, also, that they always seemed worried and unhappy. With time, he comes to realize that it is because they live in relative poverty. He realizes he has not been helping their situation because he has been stealing food from them. To make up for this, he starts gathering wood and stacking it by their door. As he watches the people, the monster gradually becomes more self-aware. One day, he catches his own reflection in a pool of water, and he realizes his own grotesqueness when compared to these other people. However, as he stays in the hovel a whole winter, he gradually becomes very affectionate toward the De Lacey's-though he never speaks to them and they do not know of his existence-regarding them as "his cottagers." These chapters are the first time that the reader interacts directly with the monster. As he watches the people in the cottage-who care for each other during their hardship-it becomes evident just how alone and isolated he is. Indeed, he realizes he has no social identity at all, not even a name of his own. The monster's actions throughout this section also show him to be quite opposite of the monster that Victor expected. He's actually incredibly kind once he becomes self-aware. He feels guilty when he realizes he has been stealing from poor people. And, unlike Victor who allows Justine to meet a terrible fate, the monster tries to atone for his actions with the simple gift of firewood. He is a character the reader will certainly sympathize with. The De Lacey family themselves are another key Romantic feature of this novel. The Romantics valued a simple, rustic lifestyle, one in which people lived humbly in the country, away from the torments of the city. Clearly, the De Lacey family are hard-working, compassionate individuals. Even the monster admires them, wondering at their seeming unhappiness when, it seems to him they have everything: companionship, a home, food, and a worthwhile life. When Victor encounters the monster in this section, it is clear that the monster has become, to Victor, an entirely different kind of threat than before. In previous chapters, Victor was concerned simply because the creature was brutish and hideous. Now, however, the monster is articulate and intelligent. Though the reader can see the monster as a sympathetic character, Victor doesn't seem to buy into this. However, there is also an interesting parallel here between Victor and the monster. In making this creature, Victor realized the two-fold nature of knowledge: it can bring you understanding, but it can also cause understanding of things you wish you could un-know. Like Victor's creation of the monster, the monster himself realizes, with his new knowledge of the world, that he leads a lonely life. In a sense, the monster's unaware state was a indeed a simpler state. chapters 1 Frankenstein 1-4 - Summary 2 Frankenstein 5-8 - Summary 3 Frankenstein Letters 1-4 - Summary 4 Frankenstein 9-12 - Summary 5 Frankenstein 13-16 - Summary 6 Frankenstein 17-20 - Summary 7 Frankenstein Chapters 21-24 - Walton's Letters Summary info_outline working on a study question? get help from verified tutors now! Victor continues to feel (1) stupid and (2) guilty. He mopes around, contemplating suicide.His father takes the family to their lake house at Belrive to try to put the past behind them.Victor goes off by himself to the valley of Chamounix and feels momentary happiness due to how sublime it is (again with the sublime nature bit —pay attention), but the feeling passes.