

# The External and Internal Cruelty in Frankenstein

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Picture source:

[medium.com/aeon-magazine/what-franksteins-creature-can-really-tell-us-about-ai-9efe85124eaa](https://medium.com/aeon-magazine/what-frankensteins-creature-can-really-tell-us-about-ai-9efe85124eaa)

Thomas Paine once said, "It is from the Bible that man has learned cruelty, rapine, and murder; for the belief of a cruel God makes a cruel man." Cruelty is one of the emotions that does not come with a reason. People express cruelty just for pushing what has been done to the extreme. External cruelty is the common form of cruelty, where people find pleasure when causing others suffering. However, some people tend to be cruel to themselves for various reasons, which creates internal cruelty. Internal cruelty makes one suffer without others involved in it, while in most cases, internal cruelty is like pumping air into a balloon. If a man has been cruel to himself to an extent, he would turn to express his anger to others, just as a balloon would eventually burst if there is too much air in it. Cruelty is common in the plot of the novel Frankenstein, where it shows both external and internal cruelty in support of each other. Doctor Frankenstein abandons the creature, and in return, the creature murders William and Elizabeth in a bloodthirsty way. However, both the doctor and the creature show internal cruelty towards themselves. At first, the doctor hides the truth about the creature and blames everything on himself. Meanwhile, the creature isolates himself physically in the forest and

focuses on nothing but being accepted by other people. Internal cruelty is the main cause of the external cruelty from both the doctor and the creature toward each other at the end.

Dr. Frankenstein blames all the crimes committed by the creature on himself, as being cruel to the creature becomes the only way to vent his anger, which trigger's creature's anger. Dr. Frankenstein is in conflict when he first learned the creature has killed William. On the one hand, he needs to conceal the fact of the creation because he knows it violates the law of nature; on the other hand, the letter from his father reminds him that his love, Elizabeth, is in deep pain, and the doctor wants to show the fact if it could bring peace to Elizabeth. The doctor falls into a conflicted situation since then, and things only get worse when Justine was falsely accused. Starting from this, the doctor isolates himself. Later in the plot, he refuses to reveal the truth to anyone, and he refuses everyone who helps, even including his love Elizabeth. The only thing growing in the doctor's mind is desperation. He regrets the creation, and he believes it is the creature who brought depression to him. While in the plot, his love Elizabeth consequently asks him why he is stressed, but the doctor refuses to explain. After all, there is no one he could turn to express what he truly feels since everyone close to him gradually moves away. The creator's balloon of cruelty goes bigger as he has been cruel to himself for a long time. He could only escape, and while escaping, he still keeps isolating himself, until Captain Walton saved him at the North Pole.

In the case of the creature, the cruelty has a similar origin - the internal cruelty of the creature to himself. The creature isolates himself and helps the family in the cabin quietly. However, since he finds out that no one would accept him, he turns inward and blames everything on his creator. The family in the cabin is afraid of him out of his weird appearance. It is not surprising that those simple people would reject him. However, after the family in the woods abandons him, the creature turns to his creator and claims that no one would ever accept him. Such thoughts emerge from the creature because he is still unaccepted even though he devoted everything to that family. The creature turns inward and blames his creator for creating him alone, who happens to conflict with the truth. When he talks with the doctor, the creature first wants a companion, a companion that could accept him, but his creator refused. Different from his creator, there is no one to whom the creature could turn. The creature's balloon of cruelty is also big enough to

burst. The only way for him to express his anger is to revenge on his creator. Later on, the attitude of the creature towards the doctor changes to cursing. As his balloon of cruelty bursts, the creature murders Elizabeth on the day of his creator's wedding. The creature blames what his creator has committed, which again shows the inevitable vent of anger from both sides on each other.

Their internal cruelty leads them towards an inevitable vent of anger on each other, which gives way to the extermination of both the creator and the creature. Since no one else could these two express themselves to, they vent their anger on each other. Towards the end of the novel, the creature chases the creator to the North Pole, a place where the environment fits perfectly with their internal world - isolated and lonely. Finally, they transform their internal cruelty into an external one, and the expression of external cruelty is their extermination - the creator's death and the creature's vanish. After their struggle finishes, as both balloons of cruelty burst out, leave nothing but the tragic story. Friedrich Nietzsche said, "Man is the cruelest animal." Not only we are cruel to each other, but we are also cruel to ourselves. How can we not be the cruelest of all?