Contrary to popular belief, the true monster at the heart of Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* is not Creature nor Creator, but rather isolation itself. Passage One illuminates the detrimental impact that seclusion yield over the psyche of man, as Shelley utilises hyperbolic statements, such as “a most severe evil”, to connote the overwhelming anguish pertaining to isolation. Here, Shelley’s use of the word “evil” denotes the malevolent nature of detachment, and thus, suggests that isolation, whether it be from family or society, directly results in the hatred, violence and revenge that define her gothic tale. These very consequences are made explicit in Passage Three, as Shelley’s poetic allusion to the Creatures wretchedness, “swallowed up in the whirlwind of its rage”, suggests the all-consuming and tumultuous implications of alienation. In a wider sense, this image of being “swallowed up” pertains to the other characters across the three passages, as both Walton and Frankenstein’s ambitions see them take voluntary “steps” away from the comforts of society, as they become committed and, ultimately, consumed by their respective undertakings. Moreover, Shelley looks to suggest that solitary focus can only ever result in a solitary experience, as the loss of human contact distorts one’s perception of a collective humanity.

The unity experienced by Victor throughout his idyllic childhood is placed in direct contrast with the alienation of his own ‘child’, the Creature he ignorantly gave life to. Even the death of Caroline Frankenstein, depicted in Passage Two, is conveyed with a sense of familial solidarity, as she symbolically joins the hands of “[her] children”. Shelley crafts this image of unity in order to metaphorically represent the intimacy and support of the family unit that Frankenstein does not afford his own creation. In his inability to provide the same guidance and care, Frankenstein abandons his creation, effectively severing the one tie that binds the Creature to humanity. Shelley furthermore encapsulates the solitary existence of the Creature, in Passage Three, by coupling the anguished tone of the Creature with a use of exclusive language in his cry “all men hate the wretched”. Here, Shelley’s use of the word “all” creates a distinction between humanity and the Creature, effectively conveying his Collective alienation which, in turn, accounts for the shift in the Creatures disposition, as Shelley suggests that the terrible suffering of solitude can be seen as a defining force in the lives of many.

In a wider sense then, Shelley’s *Frankenstein* contradicts the romantic belief that great works can only be produced in solitude, as Shelley exposes her belief that isolation only leads to despair. As Passage One demonstrates, Walton’s desire to conquer the “unmarked” expanse if the arctic comes at the cost of his own humanity. Once alone Walton comes to the realisation that he “[has] no friend”, as he laments that without the “company of a man ... whose eyes would reply to mind” his undertaking is just a hollow and unsung experience. In a similar sense,
Frankenstein's own isolation is often seen to be the sole cause of subsequent misfortunes, as his self-imposed exile in his unhallowed experiment causes him to lose touch with reality. Alone and uninhibited by the morality of others, Frankenstein's ambitions flare, in turn, leading to his construction of a creature "as complex and wonderful as man". Here, Shelley elucidates the notion that had Victor Frankenstein remained in the loving embrace of his family, evident in Passage Two, he may have saved himself, and those dearest to him, from the terrible fate that inevitably ensued. Hence, Shelley looks to debunk the romantic value of solitude, instead suggest that guidance, love and support provide a moral foundation that enables one to remain grounded in an ever-evolving world.

Victor Frankenstein's inability to take responsibility and fulfil his obligations to his Creature is a testament to own self-involved ignorance. In Passage Two, Shelley looks to convey the ironic nature of Frankenstein's treatment of his Creature, as the "watchful attentions" of his mother are placed in direct contrast with his own negligent indifference. Moreover, the derived words "watch" and "attention" only serve to heighten the contrast, as Frankenstein chooses to dismiss his creation entirely, initially refusing to acknowledge its very presence. This sense of ignorance embodied in Victor Frankenstein continues to permeate the third passage, in which he proclaims, "[May I] extinguish the spark I so negligently bestowed". Whilst the connotations of the word "negligently" suggest that Frankenstein has finally accepted responsibility for the creation of his "monster", he remains incapable of acknowledging that true crime was not the creation, but rather, the abandonment. Shelley laces this very proclamation with sense of undeniable irony, as she implies that Victor's lack of parental responsibility forces his 'child' into a destructive state of isolation which, ultimately, leaves the blood of those most dear to him on his own hands. Which, by extension, complements Shelley's belief that our ties to others, whether biological or not, must be honoured in order to establish and sustain a harmonious existence.

In a wider sense, Frankenstein's blatant rejection of the Creature reflects the superficiality and rigid structure of society as a whole. In Passage Three, Victor Frankenstein's immediate response to his creation is representative of society at large, as Shelley utilises disparaging phrases such as, "abhorred monster" and "wretched devil" to convey the aesthetic prejudices experienced by the Creature. This notion of experience is further conveyed through Shelley's indirect emphasis on the word "expected" in the Creature assertion that he had "expected this reception", as it suggest that the Creature has already been confronted by the "barbarity" of mankind. Victor's use of the imperative is his proclamation, "Begone! I will not hear you," reflects a broader dismissal of the Creature by society, as mankind, just like his creator, refuse to delve beneath the surface of the Creatures appearance and find the benevolence at his core. Here, Shelley appears to criticise the insensitive superficiality of her contemporary society, given it was a time governed by the Romantic values of aesthetic perception, rather than the substance of one's soul.
In a broader context, Shelley looks to expose the destructive ideals of a shallow-minded society, as examines the implications of prejudice that plague the lives all who become tangled in the wretched workings of Frankenstein's fate. Made inferior by a society that values the outward appearance of its inhabitants, the Creature compares himself to the “fallen angel, who thou drivest from joy for no misdeed”, and thus, unrightfully places Victor in a god-like position. In doing this, Shelley suggests that the Creature, and indeed his destiny, lies at the mercy of a rigid society and a man who fail to see merit in imperfection. Moreover, suggesting that the “crimes” of the Creature are in essence the “crimes” of humanity, as the aesthetic values society distort the perception of its inhabitants, effectively fabricating a monster of their own devise. The zenith of Shelley’s condemnation lies in the fact that the only character to ever acknowledge the true nature of the Creature is, in fact, a blind man, ultimately suggesting that the Creature’s own appraisal of humanity rings true: mankind is “barbaric”, and perpetually blinded by its own prejudice.