

BM7, WiSe 2011/12, ASSIGNMENT 3 – Analysing Fiction

Please make sure to submit your assignment stapled together and with punch holes on the left, but not bound in any kind of folder or wrapping. Every assignment must include a “title-page” and the statement on plagiarism.

Analyse the following passage from Mary Shelley. *Frankenstein*. 1818. Ed. J. Paul Hunter. New York and London: Norton, 2003. 108-109.

London was our present point of rest; we determined to remain several months in this wonderful and celebrated city. Clerval desired the intercourse of the men of genius and talent who flourished at this time; but this was with me a secondary object; I was principally occupied with the means of obtaining the information necessary for the completion of my promise, and quickly availed myself of the letters of introduction that I had brought with me, addressed to the most distinguished natural philosophers.

If this journey had taken place during my days of study and happiness, it would have afforded me inexpressible pleasure. But a blight had come over my existence, and I only visited these people for the sake of the information they might give me on this subject in which my interest was so terribly profound. Company was irksome to me; when alone, I could fill my mind with the sights of heaven and earth; the voice of Henry soothed me, and I could thus cheat myself into a transitory peace. But busy uninteresting joyous faces brought back despair to my heart. I saw an insurmountable barrier placed between me and my fellow-men; this barrier was sealed with the blood of William and Justine; and to reflect on the events connected with those names filled my soul with anguish.

NOTE: **blight** – “Any malignant influence of obscure or mysterious origin; anything which withers hopes or prospects, or checks prosperity” (OED)

Please analyse this text, addressing the following tasks and questions. Refer to the categories presented on the narratology handout. You may write up to *three* pages of text, according to the formatting specifications of our style sheet. Any text beyond the first three pages will be ignored.

1. Focalization and Narration (40p)

- a) Comment on narration and focalisation in the given passage (only), and substantiate your statements by appropriate text references.
- b) Discuss the narrative mode of the given passage in relation to the narrative structure of the entire text.

2. Characterization (30p)

What modes of characterisation are employed in the given passage? Who is characterized in this passage and how? Substantiate your statements by appropriate text references.

3. Wider Context (30p)

- a) Name one other passage in the novel which corresponds or contrasts with this passage in one particular aspect.
- b) Describe the nature and significance of the correspondence or contrast.
- c) Relate both passages to one of the central themes of the novel.