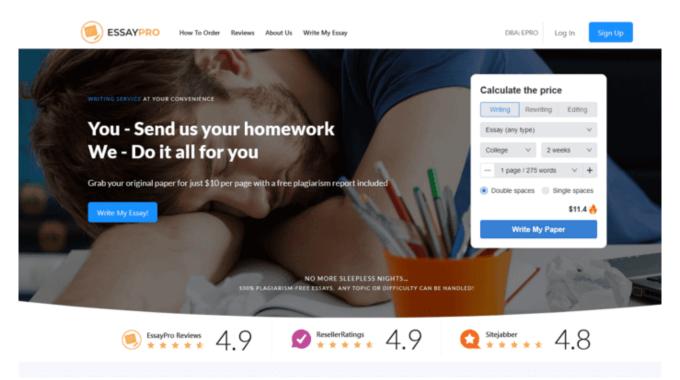
Mary Shelley's Frankenstein and the Repercussions of Overindulging Children



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Mary Shelley teaches us all well the long range effects of spoiling a child to the extreme in her novel Frankenstein. Set in the mid-19th century, the novel details the life of Victor Frankenstein and the monster he created. However, it also serves as a model of the ultimate repercussions of overindulging children. This is an issue too few parents bother with today. As their own parents did their best to provide well and ensure a better life for them, today's parents are of same mind, regardless if they had a "lacking" childhood or not. Consequently, their own children are given the best clothes and toys, and are sent to the best daycare centers, pre-schools, schools and colleges. Like Victor, many grow into self-centered,self-serving adults. Victor, as the first child, spent the first years of his life as an only child,born into an aristocratic family and showered with affection."I remained for several years their only child [T]hey [his parents] seemed to draw inexhaustible stores of affection from a very mine of love to bestow upon me" (Shelley 16).
He is a boy who wanted for nothing, and who was wholly and completely indulged, allowed

to do as he pleased. "[T]hey [his parents] were not tyrants to rule our lot according to their caprice, but the agents and creators of all the many delights which we enjoyed" (Shelley 19). Victor is more than the apple of their eye; he is the center of their world. "I was their plaything and their idol ... whose future lot ... was in their hands ... as they fulfilled their duties towards me ... I was guided [by a belief] ... that all seemed but one train of enjoyment to me ... I was their only care."(Shelley 16)

All of this, while seemingly idyllic, gave Victor a sense of godlike importance, "bestowed on them [his parents] by Heaven," (Shelley 16) like a gift from God. Everything in his life revolves around him, and the only thing that really matters in the world as he perceives it, is himself and his happiness. Even when his parents adopt a beautiful, young orphan girl, Elizabeth Lavenza,he interprets it as an action intended to entertain and satisfy him. His mother, Caroline, reinforces this belief when she announces, "I have a pretty present for my Victor" (Shelley 18), and he willingly accepts her as his new toy, " mine to protect love and cherish.

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