

By the end of studying **Chapter 8** I need to know:

**Plot:** Justine is falsely tried for murder; she is found guilty and executed. She is brave and dignified

**Ideas:** Shelly presents a person's true horrors being found within. The chapter is a commentary on Mary Shelley 's view of the justice system.

<b>Vocabulary</b>	<p><b>lassitude</b> state or feeling of being tired and listless; weariness; languor. <b>languor</b> 1. a lack of vigor or vitality; weakness. 2. a lack of interest or spirit; feeling of listlessness; indifference. 3. the condition of being still, sluggish, or dull. <b>florins</b> a British coin originally equal to two shillings: coinage discontinued in 1971. <b>pertinacity</b> the quality or condition of being pertinacious; stubborn persistence; obstinacy. <b>vacillating</b> wavering or tending to waver in motion, opinion, etc. <b>mien</b> a way of carrying and conducting oneself; manner. <b>antipathy</b> strong or deep-rooted dislike; aversion. <b>perambulations</b> walks, strolls, etc. <b>league</b> distance of about 3 miles or 4.8 kilometers. <b>ignominy</b> loss of one's reputation; shame and dishonor; infamy. <b>Countenance</b> Facial expression <b>Solemnity</b> being serious and dignified <b>Obliterated</b> destroy utterly <b>protestations</b> an emphatic declaration in response to doubt or accusation. <b>Adduced</b> site as evidence. <b>Conjecture</b> an opinion or conclusion formed on the basis of incomplete information. <b>Wantonly</b> in a deliberate and unprovoked way. <b>Disposition</b> a person's inherent qualities of mind and character. <b>Manacled</b> confine (a person or part of the body) with chains <b>Absolution</b> formal release from guilt, obligation, or punishment. <b>Thus</b> as a result or consequence of this</p>
<b>Context (To inform interpretation)</b>	<p>Justine's trial and execution suggest that there are flaws in society's institutions. Shelly suggests that society's institutions can fail people. Justine is bullied by a member of the church and executed by a court of law even though she is innocent, Frankenstein calls it a "Wretched mockery of justice"</p> <p>Like Caroline and Elizabeth, Justine is another selfless and maternal figure: corresponding closely to Victorian ideals of women.</p> <p>Shelly also comments on the church, suggesting that its not, as an institution, bringing comfort and love to people. - "my confessor has besieged me" • Places the church in a harsh light, as the pastor uses his power to bully Justine into a false confession. - "he threatened excommunication and hell fire"</p>
<b>Themes</b>	<p><b>Isolation</b>= Victor wishes he could confess in Justine's place, but his absence at the time of the murder would make his confession sound like nonsense. Victor could confess everything, including his secret, but instead he chooses silence and isolation "<b><i>A thousand times rather would I have confessed myself guilty of the crime ascribed to Justine</i></b>"</p> <p><b>Revenge</b>= At the trial, Justine maintains she is innocent, but cannot explain how William's portrait of his mother was found in her pocket. She is sentenced to death. The monster framed Justine as part of his revenge on Victor.</p> <p><b>Ambition and fallibility</b>- with Justine's death, Victor now understands the grave consequences of his ambition, but he continues to keep his secret.</p>
<b>Deeper understanding</b>	<p>Mary Shelly uses the story of Justine to criticise social institutions, drawing attention to the corruption of both the church and the legal system.</p> <p>Shelly also now suggests that true horror lies within, in the mental agonies and torments that we inflict upon ourselves. Victor sees himself as the true murderer ' <i>I bore a hell within me</i>' This echoes Milton's <i>Paradise Lost</i></p> <p>Victor's egocentric concentration on his own reaction is more than simply ungenerous: it reveals a sense of class and gender superiority. ' <i>Tortures of the accused did not equal mine</i>'</p> <p>Virtuous women- Shelly's female characters mostly represent kindness, courage and compassion. When Justine is on trial, she possesses moral courage and her innocence is never in doubt.</p>
<b>Quotes and references</b>	<p><b>"deep and voiceless grief of my Elizabeth."</b> Constructs women as voiceless, weak and submissive - especially as Justine gives in and confesses her guilt, despite being assured of her innocence. Suggesting women are complicit with the roles that men give them. She is passive and accepts her fate with minimal resistance.</p> <p><b>"The appearance of Justine was calm"</b> Justine's claims innocence and hold a calm demeanour even in the face of death.</p> <p><b>"None surely would have been so wicked as to destroy me wantonly."</b> Women appear naive - Could be seen as Mary Shelly making a point about the voicelessness of women in society. Relating to context ~ Victorian Era, where women had very few rights.</p> <p>- <b>"several strange facts combined against her"</b> The case presented by the court doesn't allow for the facts to be examined properly. - suggests that the truth is wired to present the best version that will condemn Justine and the facts are obscure and have no credibility</p>

**Reading:**

Romanticism focuses on innate feelings and Shelley explores how diverse feelings and background stories influence accounts of stories. Linking to Victor as an unreliable narrator

**Links across the text:**

In chapter 9, Frankenstein calls Justine's death the "miserable epoch from which I dated all my woe" (\*Epoch=a distinctive point in time) Frankenstein can never forgive the monster for Justine and William's deaths. This then leads to:

- 1) The monster and Frankenstein becoming enemies.
- 2) Triggers Frankenstein's refusal to make another monster
- 3) Creates a cycle of revenge which leads to more deaths

**Terminology**

**Religious Language-** The religious language contrasts the virtuous Justine with the immoral Victor ' *saintly sufferer*'

**Justine-** The chapter can be seen as a commentary on Mary Shelley 's view of the justice system; the name Justine is a word play on "Justice." This can be seen as an ironic name for a character who suffers such injustice

**Declaratives-** Victor uses declaratives to describe his inner experiences '*I cannot pretend to describe what I then felt*' This inability to express his feelings in language is a traditional feature of the Gothic genre it presents Victor as inadequate and weak.