

Dr. Frederick - Villain of Gina and the Vestibule

Name

- From Friedrich Nietzsche and Fred Trump
- Nihilism + (materialism + greed) = immorality

Sees death as an enemy

- Death is a great equalizer — everyone rich and poor dies
- Death often inspires people to do good
 - Belief in a positive judgement in a religious afterlife
 - Leave behind a legacy
 - Live on in a family's and friends' memory of them
 - Do good while they still can, knowing that life is short
- Death devalues physical pleasures and rewards. (You can't take it with you.)
- Fear of loss of consciousness and control.
- Destroys perception of self-worth. (The world will go on without you as it had before you.)

Seeks physical immortality

- Justifications
 - Great human achievement. (Immortality always a human dream in myth and fiction.)
 - Has become scientifically possible in the world of the story. (If it can be done, it must be done — even if the consequences are unknown and dangerous.)
 - Free humanity from natural constraints.
 - Believes humans can do great things without the limitations of mortality.
 - Can ensure survival of the human race even if the earth's resources are depleted.
- Ulterior motives
 - Will receive personal glory and financial gain from the breakthrough.

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- Primacy of the self. When humans are immortal, they no longer need anyone else.
 - No more need for children, along with their effort, expense, and potential for disappointment.
 - No more need for love, since there is no need for family or romantic bonds. Sex can be purely for self-gratification.
 - Since not everyone can afford immortality, it would ensure the ultimate caste system. Only the rich can live forever, and the poor are mortal and disposable.
 - No more need for morality for the immortal. There is no belief in an afterlife where there would be judgement. There is no need to leave behind a legacy. People can live for themselves, and they are accountable to no one and nothing.
 - Can winnow out the “undesirables” of society. The poor and other “unnecessary” people can die off, especially as jobs are lost through automation. This would leave behind a small group of the rich immortals and the poor who serve them.
- How to convince the poor to go along with the system. (Ties into the obstacles Dr. Frederick places in Gina’s path.)
- False promises of prosperity and power. If they work hard, they too can join the immortal rich (even though the system is stacked to prevent them from doing so.)
 - Distractions, including sexually charged music, outrageous pop culture, celebrities, and manufactured outrage.
 - Demonizing those who show the truth about Dr. Frederick’s plans. (Fake news.)
 - Discrediting and destroying healthy, positive emotions (love, compassion, mutual caring).
 - Despair, robbing people of the will to resist or ask for change.
 - Denial, where the people are convinced that everything is OK even when they see that it isn’t.

Why mass shootings are referenced in the story

- Violence is the ultimate symbol of selfishness: Destroying others for self-satisfaction.
- Killers seek immortality from committing heinous acts (and often get it). While the killers are often remembered, their victims are often forgotten.
- Using technology (guns) to disrupt the natural process of life.

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- Remind us that life is short and can end suddenly for anyone.
- Reference how youth today seeks to break the cycle of violence. They confront the rich, cruel, and powerful by using creativity and compassion. (March for Our Lives)
- Attack those who profit from mass shootings and discredit their victims.
- Remind us that we should honor the dead by remembering them and carrying on their good works. By keeping alive their stories, we make them immortal in a meaningful way.

How Dr. Frederick's beliefs tie in with his actions

- Note: Avoid the stereotypical villain's monologue.
- He has been working on physical immortality since 1999. He realizes that he must destroy morality before he can conquer mortality. He sees that the process of death gives life meaning and purpose. And the belief in some eternal judgement helps people choose goodness and compassion.
- Through various methods (waves hands), he is able to visit the Vestibule and sees how people go towards paradise (heaven) or judgement (hell), or physically saved and returned to life.
- He wants to replace the Vestibule with a memory hole, where the dead are instantly forgotten.
- Until he can form the memory hole, he creates temptations or dangers to distract spirits and disrupt their natural flow in the Vestibule. Too fearful to pass, they remain penned in one corner. This gives Dr. Frederick the chance to create his memory hole undisturbed.
- Each of his obstacles corresponds to his immoral philosophy and the lies behind them:
 - The Rage Beast screams endless lies. Gina defeats him by feeding him back his lies, showing how they contradict each other and how far they are from the truth. From this encounter, she rescues the Angel Child (Sandy Hook).
 - At a place called the Neon City, there is a ruby crown that offers to make "every man a king" with promises of wealth and power. But when the crown falls off, the rubies shatter because they are really red-colored glass. The promises are fake. The Mechanic, the man who wore the crown is now free to think clearly. He joins Gina and the Angel Child (Route 91/Las Vegas).

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- The Rock God destroys a field of happy sunflowers with his vulgar and loud rock music. He brags about how large his penis is as he's accompanied his harem of (underage) girls with blond wigs and abnormally big breasts, whom he calls his Boobages. Gina and her friends takes off the girls' mind-controlling wigs revealing them to be intelligent and free-thinking. Their bodies also return to their normal size. During the battle, they accidentally dropped the Rock God's pants, exposing how small his penis actually is. Embarrassed, he melts into a puddle. They rescue the Scholar he had trapped and planned to make a part of his harem. She joins the quest (Stoneman Douglas).
- Gina and her friends fall into the Pit of Despair and have a hard time escaping. That's when they plant one of the seeds they saved from the field of happy sunflowers. The flowers magically grow back, and their happy song dries up the Pit of Despair so they can escape.
- They finally meet Dr. Frederick and his growing memory hole. He tempts Gina with the gift of immortality. She decides she'd rather die than live in his immoral world. She kicks him into the memory hole. It vanishes, and he vanishes with it. The Scholar remarks about the good he could have done with his discoveries, she says he had no intention of using them that way.

How Dr. Frederick is revealed in the story (to build mystery and avoid monologuing)

- At the opening: The Teacher who Gina meets at the Vestibule mentions the Rage Monster and there might be other monsters beyond it. But he doesn't know what they are and how they got there. The Vestibule implies the presence of God, but humans control how it is used.
- At the Rage Monster: During the battle, the Rage Monster mentions Dr. Frederick as part of his conspiracy theories. After the Rage Monster is defeated, the Angel Child tells Gina about the Neon City (where the ruby crown is located) and the Pit of Despair. He doesn't know about a Dr. Frederick.
- At the Neon City: The Mechanic says that Dr. Frederick put the ruby crown on his head with the promise that "every man is king." He says the Pit of Despair is past the sunflower field, although it may be hidden.
- At the Rock God: The Scholar knows all about Dr. Frederick from her interest in medicine. She says he was the leading expert in cellular biology, but "something went terribly wrong." When the Mechanic tells her that he saw him, she becomes nervous because she is afraid he may be up to something.

- After the Pit of Despair: Dr. Frederick reveals himself after they defeated all of his traps and monsters.

How the heroes' battles challenge and defeat the villain's beliefs

- Dr. Frederick believes children are useless and too young to be helpful. But the Angel Child himself helps Gina defeat the Rage Monster by applying logic.
- Dr. Frederick believes in pursuing selfish desires. After Gina destroys the Mechanic's crown, he remembers how he gave up a music career to get married and start a family. He values love and family over fame and public adoration. He also got satisfaction from his blue collar job by helping others with their car problems.
- Dr. Frederick believes people are just things to be used for gratification. The heroes defeat the Rock God by taking the wigs off the Boobages and get them to reclaim their value as people. The girls then commit to restore the destroyed sunflower field by using the seeds left behind. (The sunflower had earlier given some of his seeds to the Mechanic to eat, which reminded him of enjoying them when he coached his son's baseball team.)
- Dr. Frederick uses despair to subjugate people. Gina uses the seeds the Mechanic still has to plant sunflowers near the Pit of Despair. (She is willing to sacrifice herself to save her deceased friends even though she's still physically alive.) The sunflowers' song of hope and happiness dries up the pit so Gina and her friends can escape.
- Dr. Frederick values physical life above everything else. Gina is willing to die to save her friends and do what is right.

Other reasons why Dr. Frederick would attack Gina besides stopping his plans

- Gina Lopez is a teenage non-white middle class girl. She would have no place among Dr. Frederick's immortal rich.
- She sees through Dr. Frederick's lies, beliefs, and tactics.
- She won't be manipulated or constrained by him like her companions.
- She embodies the opposite of his values and stands in conflict with them.
- She is still alive, but she values friendship, hope, compassion, and love more than life. She rejects the physical immortality Dr. Frederick offers in place of the spiritual immortality gained by helping others and making the world a better place.

Thematic outcomes from Dr. Frederick's defeat

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- Death gives life value and meaning. By acknowledging that our life is limited, we do whatever we can to do good in the world and leave a positive legacy.
- Death is the great equalizer. It is incumbent on all of us to build a better world.
- We honor those who have died by remembering them and carrying on the work they left behind.
- Interfering in the natural order of life and death brings about negative consequences. Even though physical immortality is humanity's dream, it can be used for corrupt purposes.
- We must do what we can to protect people from gun violence, especially children.
- By caring for others instead of living for ourselves, we can defeat any obstacle.
- Everyone has value, no matter who they are.
- The selfish immorality offered by Dr. Frederick can be overcome by selfless courage, compassion, and love.