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Karina Canas English 2323 2/15/12 Supernatural vs. Natural Ever been watching television and out of nowhere a picture frame or some other object fall without anyone moving it? Was it some supernatural power that caused it to fall like a ghost that is haunting a house or was the picture frame just placed wrong? The Castle of Otranto has many mysterious events that happen all throughout the novel, but not all of them are said to be supernatural. Some of the events can actually be explained, but others can’t therefore are said to be supernatural.

The very first thing that happens in the novel is the giant helmet “ larger than any casque ever made for human beings” that had fallen randomly out of the sky and crushed Conrad. There is no reasonable explanation to how anyone could have dropped it on Conrad because it was that huge that no one could have lifted it. One of the events that can be explained is when Manfred is trying to chase after Isabella but stops when the “ moon presented to his sight the plumes of the fatal helmet, which rose to the height of the windows, waving backwards and forwards in a tempestuous manner, and accompanied with a hollow and rustling sound”.

The reflection of the moon casted a shadow of the helmet and the wind caused the shadow to appear to be waving. The rustling sound was most likely made by the animals or the guards walking.

This event appears to be natural though it does give the setting a scary atmosphere. Falling photograph frames are somewhat normal, but Horace Walpole took it a little farther and mentioned the portrait of Manfred’s “ grandfather uttered a deep sigh, and heaved its breast”. Not only did his grandfather in the portrait sighed, but “ it also quit its panel, and descended on the floor with a grave and melancholy air and then motion for Manfred to follow him”.

Just like in Harry Potter moving portraits that talk are fictions, but it is a very effective way to raise the climax and give the reader a feeling of mystery and raise the climax. Especially when he finally gets to the door of the chamber and it is “ clapped to with violence by an invisible hand”.

The door is not actually held by an invisible hand. It is most likely locked up that’s why Manfred has a hard time opening the door. Later while Manfred is searching for Isabella, his guards Diego and Jaquez manage to get the door open and find what they believe to be a “ giant lying down, for the foot and leg were stretched at length on the floor”.

This giant could possibly be the owner of the giant helmet at the beginning of the novel, but there is still no explanation of how the giant got to the chamber without anyone noticing it. Even the guards mention how the giant is supernatural for they suggest for Manfred to “ send for the chaplain, and have the castle exorcised because it appears to be enchanted”. Towards the end of the novel Frederic mentions that while he was in the forest he found a hermit who “ St.

Nicholas had appeared to and revealed a secret that he was to disclose to mortal man only on the day of his death-bed”.

The apparition of a dead saint is supernatural because the dead don’t come back to life. When Manfred offers Frederic to marry his daughter Matilda “ three drops of blood fell from the nose of Alfonso’s statue meaning that the blood of Alfonso will never mix with that of Manfred”. There has been many cases where it is said that statues bleed or cry, and even though there are proofs there is no logically explanation to this events other than the fact that they are supernatural.

As mention there are many mysterious events which cannot be explained, but give a sense of scariness in the novel.

The most effective in mystery are the giant helmet which gives intrigues the reader to keep on reading to try and solve the mystery of it and the grandfather coming out of his portrait and leading Manfred to the giant who could possibly the owner of the mysterious helmet. Supernatural and natural events are both great to create mystery that sometimes it is hard to tell them apart.