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THE ART OF THE AUTHOR: A DEFENSE OF SERVANTS IN
THE CASTLE OF OTRANTO

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate School of
Clemson University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
English

by
Laura Caroline Dunn
December 2021

Accepted by:
Dr. Erin Goss, Committee Chair
Dr. William Stockton
Dr. Elizabeth Rivlin

ABSTRACT

The parts of this thesis work together to understand Walpole's Prefaces, defend the presence of servants in the novel, and critique Manfred's dismissal of the servants as merely comedic necessity for the sake of dramatic tension. Ultimately this thesis shows that while servants are comedic, their comedy has the larger function of providing illuminating details and prophetic information to the reader thereby mediating our understanding of key events and characters. This thesis finds that Walpole does not dismiss servants, but rather values them as essential to his design of creating tension intended to boost the reader's excitement.

DEDICATION

For my grandmother

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The completion of this thesis would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of my cohorts and friends: Allison Daniels, Mary Frankovich, Evelyn Grey, Caroline Kinderthain, and Zach Kinsella. My gratitude goes out to Dr. Elizabeth Rivlin and Dr. Will Stockton for their time and patience. Special thanks to my Advisor and Chair, Dr. Erin Goss, for believing in this thesis and sticking with me even when this was a poorly written draft for her Feminist Literature course. To my family as well: Mom, Dad, Tanner, my grandparents, Uncle Chris, Aunt T, and Weston for their encouragement. To Travis, my partner, who sheltered in place with me this past year and now knows more about *The Castle of Otranto* than he ever intended. And to Hazel, who was by my side every step of the way and who I blame for any typos.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
TITLE PAGE	i
ABSTRACT.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
PREFACE.....	1
INTRODUCTION	2
PARTS	
I. BUT I SHALL MAKE USE OF HIS OWN WORDS	6
II. WITH REGARD TO THE DEPARTMENT OF THE DOMESTICS	13
III. I BEG LEAVE TO ADD A FEW MORE WORDS.....	22
IV. I CANNOT BUT BELIEVE, THAT THE GROUND WORK OF THE STORY IS FOUNDED ON TRUTH.....	30
CONCLUSION.....	33
REFERENCES	36

PREFACE

*The following work was found in the library of an accomplished graduate student from Clemson University. It was printed at Easley, in Times New Roman, in the year 2021. How much sooner it could have been written is not clear. The style is the purest American. If the thesis was written near the time when it is presumed to have been completed, it must have been between 2020, the era of COVID-19, and August 2021, the date of widespread vaccination. The beauty of the diction, and the zeal of the author (moderated, however, by singular judgment), concur to make me think that the delay of composition has little impact on the impression. It is not unlikely that an artful student might endeavor to discuss how servants operate in *The Castle of Otranto* and might avail herself of her abilities as an author to disconfirm the populace in their ancient errors and superstitions. If this was her view, she has certainly acted with single address. Such a work as the following would ensnare a hundred Gothic minds, beyond half the theses that have been written from the days of Walpole to the present hour.*

INTRODUCTION

Upon my first reading of *The Castle of Otranto* and from the beginning of my writing process I was interested in how Bianca creates tension and sets off a chain reaction of events only to be labeled as a side character in someone else's story. Why would Manfred continue to disregard the valuable information she offers him? Why would he call her foolish when she isn't? This thesis started as an attempt to understand why Walpole has his main character, Manfred, dismiss the servants in *The Castle of Otranto* so forcefully, but throughout the writing process I came to realize his dismissal is one of many object lessons of the story. This paper is called "The Art of the Author" in reference to Walpole's first Preface, in which he asserts, "the art of the author is very observable in his conduct of the subalterns." Walpole attempts to defend his work and his use of "true-to-life" characters in his Prefaces as key examples of what he calls his art. Art is a word Walpole uses when referencing his design and the intentions for his story and is frequently referenced in connection to his representation of servants. The parts of this thesis work together to understand Walpole's Prefaces, defend the presence of servants in the novel, and critique Manfred's dismissal of the servants as merely comedic necessity for the sake of dramatic tension.

While this thesis finds itself among critics who use Walpole's Prefaces as cues for what themes to look for in his story and critics who seek to understand how Shakespeare inspired *The Castle of Otranto*, I challenge critics like Bedford, Hamm, and Dole who discuss Shakespeare's influence on Walpole but fail to give extended attention to Walpole's claims of modeling his servants after Shakespeare.

Ultimately this thesis shows that while the servants are comedic, their comedy has a larger function of providing illuminating details and prophetic information to the reader and mediating our understanding of key scenes and characters thereby asking the reader to empathize with them. Walpole does not dismiss them, but rather values his servants as essential to his design and representative of a desirable hybridity of tragedy and comedy. This desirable hybridity becomes apparent throughout the novel when the servants appear in the same scenes as the princes and princesses. While the servants seem to belong to the world of comedy, the princes and princesses belong to the world of tragedy. The contrast and class difference between the two types of characters allows the servants to critique the nobles and allows the nobles to easily dismiss the servants' prophetic warnings as "foolishness." Walpole's frequent use of the Cassandra metaphor creates a tension intended to boost the reader's excitement and heighten their impatience for the coming catastrophe.

I argue that if a reader walks away from *The Castle of Otranto* still dismissing servants as Manfred does then they have failed to give attention to how these servants operate to critique characters and mediate our understanding of events. When viewed through this lens, *The Castle of Otranto* becomes a cautionary tale that urges readers to understand the different ways that servants and peripheral characters can offer new perspectives on events.

Part One of this thesis is entitled "But I Shall Make Use of His Own Words" in reference to Walpole's second Preface where he uses Voltaire's own words to defend the art of creating characters that act and react naturally to the events in the story. This section is dedicated to a discussion of Walpole's own words in the Prefaces to the first

and second editions of *The Castle of Otranto*, that explain his intentions to the reader. Other critics have used Walpole's Prefaces in an attempt to better understand what Walpole is trying to accomplish in his work. My reading of the Prefaces, though, foregrounds their status as performances in themselves. When I read the first Preface to *The Castle of Otranto*, I imagine Walpole delivering it with the same dramatic flare an actor uses to deliver a monologue on stage. Walpole's fondness for the theatre is apparent in the first Preface, for example, as he is essentially acting out the part of translator of the text. I read the second Preface with more seriousness, but with the same theatricality Walpole might have used to deliver a speech to Parliament. With no acknowledgment of Walpole's tone in his Prefaces, critics can sometimes take his words too seriously or not seriously enough, and they might even miss the two jokes he makes! For example, while I interpret Walpole's Prefaces as an argument for his use of "nature"—i.e. stereotypes in constructing servant characters—, Süner sees Walpole's Prefaces as an argument for his use of comedic elements. While Süner reads servants as a way for Walpole to further his comedic goals, I read Walpole's use of comedy as a byproduct of the stereotypes he uses to create his "natural" characters.

Part Two is entitled "With Regard to the Department of the Domestics" in reference to a quotation from Walpole's second Preface where he discusses his servants in more depth than he did in the previous Preface. This section discusses what Walpole means when he uses the word "art" and how this art can be seen in his character Bianca. It also examines how Walpole's servants function as plot devices that create dramatic tension and argues for the place of servants in his work.

Part Three: “I Beg Leave to Add a Few More Words,” examines the ways servants create sympathy and act as mediators and sites of identification for the reader throughout the novel. Because narration is noticeably absent from key scenes where servants have supernatural encounters, the servant characters mediate our understanding of how the reader is supposed to interpret the supernatural events and other events in the story. The title of this section is in reference to the same quotation from the second Preface where Walpole gives the reader another explanation of why his servants occupy a large portion of the novel.

Part Four is entitled “I Cannot But Believe, That the Ground Work of the Story is Founded on Truth” in reference to the first Preface when Walpole suggests the real foundations for his fictional work. In Part One, I argue this quotation is Walpole’s attempt to distract critics and brag about his home Strawberry Hill, but, following the conclusions I draw in Part Three, I suggest that *The Castle of Otranto* takes as one of its truths Voltaire’s dismissal of true-to-life characters and that Manfred enacts this dismissal on the page.

PART ONE

BUT I SHALL MAKE USE OF HIS OWN WORDS

(In which I discuss Walpole's Prefaces and their almost-defense of his characters.)

Critics of *The Castle of Otranto* frequently turn to the Prefaces as a way of gaining insight into Walpole's intentions as an author; however, perhaps due in part to the digressive nature of the Prefaces, few have followed up on the attention Walpole gives to servants in them. In both editions to *The Castle of Otranto* Walpole includes Prefaces that, in part, offer the reader an explanation and apology for the space servants occupy in his novel. Although the space Walpole dedicates to his servants in his first Preface is minimal, the space he dedicates to revisiting his servants in the second Preface acknowledges their importance in *The Castle of Otranto*. However, Walpole's impersonation of the translator William Marshal in the first Preface and digressive argument in the second Preface does little to actually defend his servants, suggesting he is more concerned with how critics will receive his mixing of tragedy and comedy than defending how servants operate in the text to achieve this goal. Although Walpole's Prefaces are digressive, they provide valuable insight into his intentions of using "natural" comic characters to contrast tragic characters to create a tension intended to boost the reader's excitement and heighten their impatience for the coming catastrophe.

In the Preface to the first edition, Walpole defends his servants by telling the reader they oppose the "principal personages," "discover many passages essential to the story," and "conduce essentially toward advancing the catastrophe" referring to the ways his servants use their unique social position as by-standers to gather information, reveal information to the reader, and critique Manfred and Matilda (60). Walpole refers to

Bianca's scene in the last chapter of the novel as evidence of how his true-to-life characters create scenes that naturally lead the story to a resolution. However, instead of providing further examples to defend his art, Walpole provides red herrings to critics and offers explanations of why certain aspects of his work cannot be criticized.

In the latter half of his first Preface, Walpole uses his authority as translator to delimit what the reader can and cannot criticize in his text and thus shows his concern for the way it will be received. Walpole justifies using supernatural elements by saying the text was written between the first and the last Crusade when people believed in the supernatural. Since current readers are aware that the text was actually written in 1764, this anachronistic explanation can be read as an excuse for why Walpole believes he should not be critiqued based on eighteenth-century standards and why he later attaches the subtitle "A Gothic Story" to the title. Walpole's concern over the novel's reception is not unfounded; Hudson explains how cultural turmoil in the seventeenth century caused the critical distinction between 'romance' and 'historical' prose works, which defined romance as a kind of 'falsehood,' and how by the beginning of the eighteenth century, so called 'love adventures' had been marginalized by realist novels (46). Walpole's creation of a false history for his novel shows his playing with the differentiation between 'romance' and 'historical' and his desire to help redefine English prose romances.

Walpole goes on to explain that his work cannot be critiqued based on the literary traditions associated with romance saying, "The piety that reigns throughout, the lessons of virtue that are inculcated, and the rigid purity of the sentiments, exempt this work from the censure to which romances are but too liable" (61). Walpole's interest in romance shows up again in the second Preface, but here he insists his novel be taken seriously

because, unlike other romance novels, which were criticized for their lack of serious material, his work appeals to morality. Walpole's resistance to literary criticism continues in his second Preface to *The Castle of Otranto* published the following year in 1765.

Walpole claims he wrote the Preface to the second edition of *The Castle of Otranto* to address his own authorship and explain his motivations for writing the novel; however, his defensive tone and insistence on his own craft shows his resistance to critics like Voltaire who Walpole believed would not understand his design. Walpole's self-consciousness is apparent as he begins his Preface by apologizing to the reader for previously masking his authorship, offering the excuse that he wanted the audience to remain unbiased when judging his attempt to blend ancient and modern romances—and yet the Prefaces create bias, and at great length. First, disguised as William Marshal Walpole vouched for his own work, worked to manipulate his audience into believing it was written in a different time period, and praised *The Castle of Otranto* as “elegant” and masterful” (65).¹ Now, in his second Preface, Walpole disavows “better judges” by becoming his own critic.

Walpole's second Preface shows that Walpole is self-conscious about how his audience will interpret his servant characters, specifically the way these characters act “naturally” to mix comedic and tragic elements. Walpole places emphasis on wanting to write natural characters saying, in the third person, “he wished to conduct the mortal agents in his drama according to the rules of probability; in short, to make them think, speak, and act, as it might be supposed mere men and women would do in extraordinary

¹ For more information about how Walpole works to manipulate his reader through material evidence, historical context, and empiricist rhetoric see: Lake, Crystal B. “Bloody Records: Manuscripts and Politics in *The Castle of Otranto*.” *Modern Philology* 110: 4 (2013): 489-512.

positions” (65). Similarly to his first Preface, Walpole says if the reader suspends their disbelief in the supernatural elements they will see his characters respond naturally. He then criticizes old romances because he believes their characters do not react naturally to extraordinary events and says they lose all their senses (66). For Walpole, the art of stories that use “true-to-life” characters stems from being able to use them to create a realistic sequence of events instead of fabricating out-of-character actions that serve the author’s purpose. Walpole explains how his characters act naturally in extraordinary situations saying, “the simplicity of their behavior, almost tending to excite smiles, which, at first, seems not consonant to the serious cast of the work, appeared to me not only improper, but was marked designedly in that manner” (66). Essentially, Walpole’s first defense of his characters is that they act rudely and foolishly because he designed them that way, adding that “naturally” the servants cannot be expected to be as dignified as the princes in his story. This thesis argues that while Walpole creates servants as characters that lead the story to a resolution, he does not write true-to-life servant characters because he cannot erase the class difference between himself and his characters and thus cannot comprehend the servants he produces as persons. Throughout the novel, Walpole’s servants frequently demonstrate recognizable stereotypes associated with their specific class like foolishness, belief in superstitions, and overreliance on oral tradition. Walpole’s claims that his servants are “natural” and “true-to-life” belie his inability to perceive servants as anything other than caricatures and stereotypes. For Walpole, it seems, stereotypes, however unnatural current readers may recognize them to be, accurately reflect servants’ nature.

Walpole further justifies the servants' behavior because he claims their humor sets the emotions of the "princes and heroes" in a "stronger light" and the delays in action the servants cause maintain the reader's interest in the story. Finally, Walpole defends his characters by saying he modeled them after Shakespeare, effectively shielding himself behind an author that greatly contributed to the English literary tradition and whom he considers the master of nature. He says, "But I had higher authority than my own opinion for this conduct. The great master of nature, Shakespeare, was the model I copied" (66). Whether or not Walpole does justice to Shakespeare or accurately copies him is not for this author to say; however, other critics have given considerable attention to Shakespearian allusion in the novel². Walpole seems to believe Shakespeare's authorial precedence is enough to assuage critics because Walpole's introduction of Shakespeare is where his defense of his own characters ends.

What began as a defense of Walpole's own characters quickly becomes a celebration and defense of Shakespeare's art as Walpole tries to elevate his own by linking the two. Walpole's defense of Shakespeare suggests Walpole is chiefly concerned with defending the art of mixing tragedy and comedy. He challenges, "Let me ask, if his tragedies of *Hamlet* and *Julius Caesar* would not lose a considerable share of their spirit and wonderful beauties, if the humour of the gravediggers, the fooleries of Polonius, and the clumsy jests of the Roman citizens, were omitted, or vested in heroics" (67). This line of rhetorical questioning implies that Walpole believes that Shakespeare's humor and vernacular language accentuates the beauty of his tragedies and that these tragedies

² For Shakespearian allusion in the novel see: Dole, Carol M. "Three Tyrants in *The Castle of Otranto*." *English Language Notes* 26 (1988): 26-35. Bedford, Kristina. "'This Castle Hath a Pleasant Seat': Shakespearian Allusion in *The Castle of Otranto*." *English Studies in Canada* 14 (1988): 415-435. Hamm, Robert B., Jr. "Hamlet and Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*." *SEL: Studies in English Literature* 49:3 (2009): 667-692.

would be lessened by their absence. Walpole's example from Shakespeare aligns with his description of his own characters' function of contrasting the main characters, but Walpole does not provide further discussion of how his characters model Shakespeare's or mix tragedy and comedy.

Walpole does not return to his defense of his own characters and instead starts defending Shakespeare from Voltaire; Walpole argues Voltaire is wrong in saying there is no art in writing true-to-life characters. Although defending Shakespeare's characters could be seen as a quasidefense of his own, if his characters do in fact model Shakespeare's, Walpole's argument is convoluted. Walpole praises Shakespeare and attacks Voltaire more often than he provides evidence in his defense. Walpole's use of Voltaire's own works to defend Shakespeare showcases his knowledge of art and literature and displays what he believes is Voltaire's dismissal of Shakespeare and "true-to-life" characters. He uses a quotation from the editor of Voltaire's comedy *The Prodigal Son* to show that Voltaire violated his own principals of dramatic purity by mixing tragedy and comedy (68)³. While Walpole digressed from his own servant characters several paragraphs before, his critique of Voltaire shows he is no longer concerned with defending his mixing of old and new romances, but is chiefly concerned with critiquing the improbable language and actions in old romances and how true-to-life characters mix comedy and tragedy to achieve a more probable progression of events. He quotes Voltaire again to show his bias against "true-to-life" characters saying, "After translating a passage in Maffei's *Mélope*, Monsieur de Voltaire adds, 'All these features are artless; everything in them matches the characters you bring to the stage and the

³ Walpole addresses the fact the Preface he takes the quotation from is not in Voltaire's name, although, now it is, in a cheeky joke referring to his own deception in his first Preface when he says, "yet who doubts that the editor and the author were the same person" (68).

customs you attribute to them. These sorts of true-to-life common places would have been, I believe, well received in Athens, but Paris and those who sit in our stalls want a different kind of simplicity” (translation from Frank 69). This claim seems to be Walpole’s main concern and he makes it because he believes it was unjust for Voltaire to say there is no art in depicting “true-to-life” characters even though *Mérope* was based on a Grecian story and people from over two thousand years ago. By doing this Walpole is defending himself from future critics that try to critique him based on standards associated with the difference between romance and realist novels going on to allege that Voltaire is wrong for saying that there is no art or imagination in writing true-to-life characters (69). Walpole concludes his defense by quoting from Act I Scene I of Racine’s *Bérénice* (1670) that explains how to get to the Queen’s room and admonishes Voltaire for giving a harsh critique of the gravedigger’s moral discussion of suicide from *Hamlet*, in his Preface to *Sémiramis*, while defending a discussion of a castle floor plan in Racine. Walpole implies that Voltaire dismisses the gravediggers and similar low characters despite how their comedy contributes to the moral lesson and advancement of their story; a trait that the reader will also notice in Walpole’s own character Manfred.

In both Prefaces, Walpole places emphasis on the artfulness of writing true-to-life characters and seems to be arguing that when included in a tragic work these characters create a desirable hybridity of tragedy and comedy superior to old romances. I argue that a close examination of the servants’ plot function within *The Castle of Otranto* more effectively defends both their presence in the novel and Walpole’s claims that the conduct of his servants critique his principal characters, advance the plot, and create suspense.

PART TWO

WITH REGARD TO THE DEPARTMENT OF THE DOMESTICS

(In which I defend Walpole's art and servants more thoroughly than he does.)

In both editions to *The Castle of Otranto* Walpole includes Prefaces that, in part, offer the reader an explanation for the space servants occupy in his novel. Although Walpole's Prefaces are digressive enough to rival the servant characters he creates and derides, they do provide valuable insight into his intentions of creating "natural" characters and mixing comedy and tragedy, whether those intentions are sufficiently fulfilled or not. While critics have been discussing *The Castle of Otranto* since its publication, there seems to be a lack of attention given to its servants. While some critics like Robbins, Hudson, and Lawrence do mention them in their critical works there is a lack of the extended discussion of their plot function that Walpole's Prefaces demand. I challenge critics who read Walpole's Prefaces as dismissive of servants and who, based on their reading, file Bianca and the other servants away as unimportant. This thesis works to prove that Walpole values his servants as essential to his design and that their comedy has the larger function of mediating our interpretation of the narrative. I argue that if a reader walks away from *The Castle of Otranto* still dismissing servants as Manfred does then they have missed how Walpole uses servants to critique his main characters and mediate our understanding of events.

In his Prefaces, Walpole implies that creating natural, true-to-life characters is part of the art he wishes to accomplish with *The Castle of Otranto*. In the first Preface he says, "the art of the author is very observable in his conduct of the subalterns. They discover many passages essential to the story, which could not be well brought to light

but by their *naïveté* and simplicity” (60). Then in the second Preface, Walpole says that their naïveté and simplicity was part of his design; he says, “The simplicity of their behavior was marked designedly in that manner. My rule was nature” (66). For Walpole, creating an inspired and artful piece of literature means that his characters speak and act like ordinary men and women would. He says, “He had observed, that, in all inspired writings, the personages under the dispensation of miracles, and witness to the most stupendous phenomena, never lose sight of their human character” (65-66). Walpole designed *The Castle of Otranto* to prove he could create a story where characters still follow the laws of probability in the face of improbable events, those improbable events being the fulfillment of an ancient prophecy and the appearance of gigantic, armored, disembodied limbs. Walpole says his art is observable in the conduct of the subalterns, specifically “the womanish terror and foibles of Bianca, in the last chapter” referring to the way Bianca reacts to a gigantic armored hand (60). By examining Bianca’s responses to the supernatural events in the novel and the extent to which these responses critique other characters and offer prophetic warnings we can investigate Walpole’s art.

Walpole uses Bianca throughout *The Castle of Otranto* to foreshadow, reveal information, provide background information, and create opportunities for plot development, supporting the claim he makes that she advances the catastrophe and contrasts the principal persons. Walpole can use Bianca to accomplish his goal of advancing the plot naturally because her position as a servant gives her access to private information thereby arguing for servants’ function as a plot device and an example of Walpole’s artfulness. A servant had access to all parts of the home and by extension the private life of their employers. Patricia Spacks notes that in the eighteenth century “the

consistency with which servants' manuals recommended discretion, keeping the family secrets to oneself, reveals the universal assumption that servants would know such secrets" (197). A servant's inside knowledge of the household was powerful and considered dangerous because it delineated social boundaries. Walpole uses Bianca to enact his reader's fears of exposure through his use of long-winded dialogue in the scene he references in his Preface. For Walpole, the use of long-winded dialogue is representative of a servant's "natural" reaction because, as Bruce Robbins explains in *The Servant's Hand*, it was a stereotype commonly associated with servants (60).

In Chapter Five of *The Castle of Otranto*, Bianca speaks with Manfred on two separate occasions, the first before her supernatural encounter and the second immediately following; both conversations demonstrate Bianca's opposition to Manfred and create suspense by foreshadowing the end of the narrative. Bianca's encounter with the gigantic armored hand is the fourth supernatural event to take place in the novel and occurs immediately after Manfred bribes Bianca to spy on Lady Isabella⁴. Walpole has Bianca react to the gigantic armored hand like he believes "mere men and women would do," and although narration is absent from her encounter, the reader witnesses Bianca's terrified reaction in the following scene. Walpole utilizes Bianca's natural reaction to unnatural events to create long-winded dialogue that opposes Manfred by delaying his receiving information, and relaying private knowledge about Manfred's domestic affairs to Frederic. Robbins says, "The existence of such dialogues in the first place corresponds to a kind of pastoral: it embodies a toleration of 'answering back,' a temporary, conventional suspension of the master's expectation of obedient silence and of his power

⁴ It should also be noted Bianca's encounter with the giant hand directly relates to the dream origins of the novel. In a letter to William Cole in March 1765, Walpole reports that his dream about a gigantic armored hand above a staircase was the inspiration for the novel (Frank, 154).

to enforce it” (60). At the beginning of the novel the reader witnesses Manfred use physical force to assert his dominance over Isabella, a Lady; this scene is idealized because Manfred could easily use the same violence to make his servant submit; however, doing so would not further the plot or Walpole’s purpose. Walpole uses Bianca’s terror and Manfred’s confusion to create an idealized version of servant dialogue intended to reveal information, issue a final extensive prophetic warning, and stop Isabella’s marriage to Manfred and Matilda’s marriage to Frederic thereby preventing Manfred from circumventing the prophecy.

Walpole’s art can be seen in Bianca as she simultaneously delays relaying information to Manfred and reveals information to Frederic thereby successfully linking previous events in the story to prepare the reader for the conclusion of the novel. Walpole writes, “Bianca burst into the room, with a wildness in her look and gestures that spoke the utmost terror” (152); Walpole uses Bianca’s naturally terrified reaction to the gigantic armored hand that she encounters in the margins of the story to free her from lapses in social rules thereby allowing her to ignore Manfred when he tries to have her dismissed.

Robbins explains that terror allows servants to lapse into incomplete awareness thereby freeing her speech and allowing her to respond against the grain rather than submissively (65). Bianca says, “I will not sleep in the castle to-night. Would I had been content to wed Francesco! This comes of ambition” (153). Bianca’s words not only refer to her own situation of wanting a better husband than the man who previously proposed to her, but also refers to the ambition of Manfred’s ancestor Ricardo when he usurped Alfonso. Her words have a double meaning recognizable only to the reader. Walpole’s use of terror, which he claims in the first Preface is one of his principal engines, in this

scene allows Bianca to oppose and critique Manfred by subtly accusing him and his ancestors of being too ambitious.

Manfred, fearing that Bianca's terrified ramblings will spook Frederic and prevent the double marriage of their two daughters, tries to dismiss Bianca when he says, "Go to, thou hast lost thy senses. Interrupt us not; we were communing on important matters.—My lord, this wench is subject to fits" (153). Manfred uses the term wench to remind Bianca of her place because she has overstepped by intruding into his private conversation with Frederic, but Bianca's terror allows her to respond: "Oh! The saints! No, for certain it comes to warn your highness; why should it appear to me else; I say my prayers morning and evening—Oh! If your highness had believed Diego!" (153). Her "no" is a direct act of defiance, but she does not stop there, Bianca has connected the gigantic armored limbs to the prophecy mentioned at the beginning of the novel and implies that the limbs are a direct result of Manfred's actions and only appeared to her because she is his servant. Dialogue that initially appeared as ramblings meant to provide comic relief and delay Manfred (and the reader) doubles as a tactful way for Walpole to recap information the reader might have missed the first time and a way for Bianca to not be culpable for giving someone outside the household private information. Walpole continues to use Bianca's ramblings to advance the narrative by foreshadowing the coming catastrophe.

In the same scene from Chapter Five, Walpole uses Bianca's words to speak directly to the reader in order to cause a turning point in the reader's understanding of the servant characters so that we see them as more than just comic relief. She says, "Father Jerome has often told us the prophecy would be out one of these days—Bianca, said he,

mark my words” (153). When Bianca says, “mark my words” it is a direct appeal to both Manfred and the reader and foreshadows the collapse of Otranto that occurs less than ten pages later. When Manfred suggests Bianca’s words are fooleries, it is a potential turning point for the reader because we are aware that Bianca’s words operate as more than just comic relief; they operate as an oracular message and a reminder to the reader that Jaquez and Diego also tried to warn Manfred about the impending events. When Otranto Castle falls at the end of this chapter the reader comes to the realization that the servants were right about most things. By reading the rest of the novel with this scene in mind the reader can observe what Walpole believes is the literary servant’s natural response to events to determine how their (re)actions achieve Walpole’s goal of blending comedy and tragedy to further his narrative naturally and create suspense.

In the first preface, Walpole argues that the servants are in opposition to the principal personages; however, because he does not provide examples to the reader his meaning is somewhat unclear. He could mean that the servants are adversaries to the nobles as we have seen in the previous scene, or he could also mean that the servants contrast the nobles to draw attention to their traits and virtues. Servants often operate as foils for their employers in drama and literature to enhance the virtuous qualities of the latter. Robbins says, “The maid parallels the mistress as the ‘foil’ that brings out the ‘elegance’ of the jewel, as the indistinct ‘background’ that sets the upper-class foreground in sharper relief” (3). While Walpole does use his servants to bring out the virtuous qualities of the princesses, the narrative seems to argue that the princesses are too virtuous and their strict adherence to these virtues is what aids in the collapse of Otranto Castle. Isabella says as much in Chapter Four: “the purity of your own heart

prevents your seeing the depravity of others” (140)⁵. Hippolita, believing she was acting in the best interest of her family, suggested that Matilda marry Frederic in order to prevent the ruin of their house. It is arguably Hippolita’s desire to please Manfred and unwillingness to hear anything Manfred does not wish her to (103) that requires Bianca’s intervention in the last chapter. If the women had communicated with each other Hippolita would have known that Manfred tried to rape Isabella and planned to divorce her, but while servants often communicate and gossip with each other, the princesses do not out of a sense of propriety. This can be seen in Chapter Two when Matilda assumes the role of one of her mother’s maidservants before she pries into Theodore affairs because it would be improper for her to talk with a man at the late hour (98).

In Chapter Two, Walpole uses Bianca’s flattery to critique Matilda before the eyes of the reader and uses this flattery to mix comedy and tragedy. While flattery would seem to display the servants at their most servile small twists of phrase can make the compliments seem backhanded. Robbins says, “nothing is more faithful to comic tradition than a suddenly involuntary stumble from the heights of praise to a humble disservice” (66). Matilda doesn’t seem to recognize the disservice being done to her in her conversation with Bianca because Bianca’s subtle critiques are shaded by her remarks about attractive young men. When Matilda reminds Bianca that Manfred has rejected many proposals on her behalf Bianca says, “And you thank him, like a dutiful daughter, do you madam” (95). While Bianca realizes that Manfred is preventing Matilda from doing her duty to her family by finding a husband, Matilda believes that she is being dutiful by respecting her father’s wishes. Bianca shows the reader Manfred’s hypocrisy

⁵ Isabella can say this because she has already learned this lesson herself. In the first chapter, she was too innocent to discern Manfred’s intentions in the chamber by the gallery and a supernatural intervention was required to protect her virtue.

because while he is determined to secure his line, he denies Matilda the opportunity to do so for him even though she is eighteen and three years older than her recently deceased brother. Matilda does not acknowledge Bianca's backhanded compliment because Bianca goes on to make fun of Matilda for her love of a portrait of Alfonso The Good and in the process gives the reader an ocular message. She says, "suppose, to-morrow morning he was to send for you to the great council-chamber, and there you should find at his elbow a lovely young prince... a young hero resembling the picture of the good Alfonso" (95). As the reader will later come to find out, Theodore fits this description and appears to Matilda on his knees in front of her father, albeit as a peasant. She critiques Matilda again when Matilda says, "a child ought to have no ears or eyes but as a parent directs," Bianca replies, "Well, to be sure, madam, you was born to be a saint and there is no resisting one's vocation: you will end in a convent at last" perhaps foreshadowing how Manfred kills Matilda in a church (96). While Bianca appears to be in support of Matilda, she is concealing her belief that Matilda does not ask enough questions whether those questions are for Theodore or her parents, Matilda does little to advocate for herself and plays the role of dutiful daughter. Walpole's art stands out in this scene because Bianca's role as servant and confidant allows opportunities for dialogue that gives the reader oracular messages, expository information, and offers a critique of Matilda.

In this same scene, Walpole uses Bianca to speak directly to the reader in order to show them how Bianca's position as a servant gives her access to information and how her knowledge makes her a plot device for Walpole to use in the story. When Matilda questions Theodore through an open window in her bedroom, she asks Bianca what she would have asked him instead to which Bianca replies, "A by-stander often sees more of

the game than those as play” (99). Matilda does not acknowledge the statement because it is meant for the reader, Robbins argues that moments like these, when words are lifted out of the text as an aside to the reader, signifies a reaching out for the old “participatory public” of the theatre (58). An aside aligns with Walpole’s thinking of his story in dramatic terms because an aside in a play is intended to be heard by the audience but unheard by the other characters, because Bianca’s remark does not directly relate to Matilda’s conversation she does not acknowledge it. This line is an indication to the reader that even if Bianca and the other servants are not main characters they know more than we think they do and should be valued. Bianca continues this line of thought and says, “There is more in it than you great folks are aware of. Lopez told me, that all the servants believe this young fellow contrived my Lady Isabella’s escape” (99). This line provides evidence to support Bianca’s earlier claim and indicates to the reader that the servants gain their knowledge by gossiping with each other. This is the first time that a servant named Lopez has been mentioned, but he has access to and has already passed on information that we learned in the previous chapter. Because of servant gossip, Bianca has access to the same information as the reader.

The inside knowledge Bianca has about Manfred’s family and the information that she has gathered from the other servants through oral story telling gives her the same, and sometimes more, knowledge than the reader. We can sympathize with Bianca because we cannot “play” as her line says and can only observe the actions of the characters. Bianca is not the only servant the reader is given an opportunity to sympathize with; several times throughout the story the servants act as mediators and sites of identification.

PART THREE

I WILL BEG LEAVE TO ADD A FEW MORE WORDS

(In which I discuss how servants operate as mediators and sites of identification.)

Bianca's line, "A by-stander often sees more of the game than those as play" provides valuable insight into how servant characters function throughout *The Castle of Otranto*. Throughout the story servants are present to help the reader interpret events and gain insight into other characters because of the unique position they occupy within the home. Spacks discusses how servants "presided" over domestic affairs and explains that they presided "in the sense that the housekeeper and butler and steward organized every large household's operations, but also because they knew everything that went on in the household—not only what was spent, what purchased, what consumed, but what the master and mistress, and probably their sons and daughters, thought and felt and did" (197). Bianca and the other servants preside over information in *The Castle of Otranto* by overseeing the principal characters and events of the novel and communicating in the margins of the story. When the servants return to the forefront of specific scenes, it is often to dole out the information they have gathered to the reader thus interpreting the way that we perceive the events of the novel.

Bianca acts as an interpreter for the reader in her first scene in Chapter Five, but the confusion created by her conversation with Manfred could detract from the reader being able to identify how Bianca mediates our understanding. Knowing that Bianca is in the confidence of both his daughter, Matilda, and the object of his desire, Isabella, Manfred questions Bianca about the current state of Isabella's affections and she says, "she is wonderfully alarmed about her father's wounds" (151). Previously, Bianca was

perceptive enough to come to semi-correct conclusions when she and Matilda questioned Theodore, but now it appears that she is not perceptive enough to recognize when someone else is questioning her about love. Manfred says, “is there any young man—ha! you understand me” to which she says, “Lord bless me! understand your highness? No, not I” (151). Bianca’s supposed confusion could cause the reader to miss her small turn of phrase; when Manfred asks if she understands his meaning her repetition and rephrasing identifies her point of view with the authority of the reader. While Manfred believes that Bianca’s words refer to his questions about Isabella and Theodore they also refer to the reader’s ability or inability to sympathize with Manfred. Bianca reminds the reader that we do not see the events of the story from Manfred’s point of view and are instead invited to sympathize with the servants; however, because there is a double meaning to Bianca’s not understanding Manfred, this reading is secondary.

Whether Bianca is intentionally leading Manfred to believe that she does not understand his meaning or if she actually does not, her assumed naiveté causes a miscommunication between the two parties that furthers the plot and acts as a site of identification that draws the reader into the story. While Manfred is asking Bianca about Isabella’s romantic feelings, Bianca is answering him with information about Isabella’s feelings concerning her father. When Manfred asks Bianca about when Theodore and Isabella met, Bianca’s words indicate to the reader that she believes Manfred is asking about Isabella’s feelings towards Theodore to determine if he is a good match for Matilda. She says, “we are all in love with him: there is not a soul in the castle but would be rejoiced to have him for our prince” (152). Hudson says, the oral storytelling associated with servants “overlapped significantly with gossip, another subversive

narrative concept that challenged social and domestic structures” (14). The gossip Bianca shares with Manfred challenges the domestic structure of his home because Manfred now believes that the servants want Theodore to be their Prince and Isabella to be their Princess; this confusion ultimately results in Matilda’s death at the hands of Manfred.

Bianca is not the only servant that acts as an interpreter for the reader; our first supernatural event in the novel is mediated through the narrative of a servant arguing that Walpole views this servant’s reaction as natural and is an example of Walpole’s critique of old romances. Within the first few lines of the novel, a gigantic helmet crashes down and kills the son and heir of Manfred, but because narration is noticeably absent our first knowledge of the helmet comes from the narrative of an unnamed servant that we never see again in the novel. The servant comes “running back breathless, in a frantic manner, his eyes staring, and foaming at the mouth. He said nothing, but pointed to the court” (74). Rather than speaking, the servant embodies his horrified reaction to what he has seen. When he regains the ability to speak, he repeats the phrase “The helmet!” As Walpole says in his Prefaces, unlike romances, “There is no bombast, no similes, flowers, digressions, or unnecessary descriptions,” the servant’s words “tend directly to the catastrophe” (60). The servant’s reaction to seeing young Conrad crushed beneath the weight of a giant helmet is the only extended description of a character’s reaction in this scene, thereby indicating how the reader is supposed to respond to the rest of the supernatural events in the novel. This is the first but, as we’ve seen, not the last time servants interpret important narrative information.

When narration is absent from the third supernatural event in the novel, servants named Jaquez and Diego act as mediators for the reader as they relay information and

give insight into the thoughts and feelings of peripheral characters in the novel. When Manfred dismisses these characters, it plays on the Cassandra metaphor⁶ and creates the suspense Walpole wanted the reader to feel for the impending catastrophe. However, Walpole's use of the metaphor and the suspense it creates comes at the expense of the servants' reliability, reliability that Bianca later works to establish, thereby making them a site of failed identification. After Lady Isabella flees from Manfred, he dispatches servants to look for her throughout the castle. Jaquez and Diego are two of these servants and encounter a gigantic, armored, disembodied foot in the same upstairs chamber where Manfred just tried to rape Isabella. In the following scene, the reader is invited to laugh at Jaquez and Diego and while this scene can be read as funny, the humor is a byproduct of what Walpole believes is a servant's natural response—the stereotype of long-winded discursive deliveries of message. Walpole uses the servants' terror upon hearing and seeing the foot to give the reader peripheral details that highlight domestic concerns in the castle and represent a faction of servants who oppose Manfred for not giving his son a proper burial and refusing to address the concerns of his subjects. Jaquez and Diego's retelling of their supernatural encounter is long and digressive going on for almost two pages before the reader even learns what they have seen that has horrified them so much. After speaking over each other several times they finally begin their tale, Jaquez says, "Diego and I, according to your highness's orders, went to search for the young lady; but being comprehensive that we might meet the ghost of my young lord, your highness's son, God rest his soul, as he has not received Christian burial" (88). The "pleasantries" offered here highlight the domestic concerns in the novel: Jaquez and Diego are worried

⁶ The Cassandra metaphor refers to Greek mythology. The god Apollo, struck by Cassandra's beauty, gave her the gift of prophecy, but when Cassandra refused Apollo's romantic advances, he placed a curse on her ensuring that no one would believe her warnings.

that they will meet the ghost of Conrad because Manfred has not taken the time to give him a proper burial. This line also shows that the servants are superstitious and believe in ghosts, and although Manfred encountered a walking-portrait and a door that slammed shut on its own, he dismisses their fears as silly servant superstition. Manfred's dismissal of Jaquez and Diego and similar dismissal of Bianca in Chapter Five, when he says, "keep these fooleries to frighten thy companions" (153), echo Locke's concern in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693) that servants would intentionally frighten other members of the household and that those ideas once there would "follow them with terror and affrightment" (Locke, 138). Walpole also has the servants misuse the word comprehensive when they really mean apprehensive⁷ as a way of marking their foolishness and social class. Walpole uses those stereotypes here because servants were denied the same educational opportunities as the upper class and they relied mostly on oral traditions and storytelling.

Jaquez and Diego give the reader insight into the thoughts and feelings of other servants in the castle, when these voices speak as one it represents a unified opposition to Manfred that asks the reader not to sympathize with him. Because Walpole does not allow the other characters in the novel to express their feelings as openly and does not give the reader access to their thoughts, it is easier to sympathize with the servant characters in the novel. Jaquez gives the reader access to the feelings of the servants and notes the domestic failings of Manfred again when he says, "not one of us your highness's faithful servants, indeed we are, my lord, though poor men; I say, not one of us has dared to set foot about the castle, but two together" (88). By providing insight into

⁷ Frederick S. Frank notes this confusion is an allusion to Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, III.iii.24-25 in the footnotes of Broadview's 2011 edition of *The Castle of Otranto*.

the attitudes of the other servants Jaquez is commenting on the tension that Conrad's death has caused in the castle and the inability of Manfred to keep his house in order. When Jaquez finally manages to finish his narrative he says, "But for heaven's sake, good my lord, send for the chaplain and have the castle exorcised, for, for certain, it is enchanted." To which "all the servants" cry "Ay, pray do, my lord, or we must leave your highness's service" (90). When all of the servants speak as one voice it represents a unified and powerful objection to Manfred. Although the servants do not seem to know that Manfred is the cause of the supernatural events, when they say they want to have the castle exorcised to remove the supernatural forces it implies Manfred must be "exorcised" from the castle. Süner argues directly against Walpole's claim in the second preface and says, "the servant's impossibly long winded, comically stuttering articulations of their horrid discoveries to their master do not so much advance the plot, create suspense or lead to the Aristotelian emotions of fear and pity, as disorient the reader" (19). While I agree with Süner that Walpole's "curious" use of laughter undercuts the background and prophetic information the servants offer the reader, I argue that when the reader realizes that servants are right the information the servants provide foreshadows the end of the novel, gives us a broader perspective on the narrative, and offers the reader another reason not to sympathize with Manfred.

Madeline Kahn also addresses servants' unique perspective and the reader's sympathies with them in her essay in which she uses Ann Yearsley's poem addressed to Walpole to effectively argue that Bianca's position as a servant gives her a broader perspective on the narrative and Yearsley's identification with Bianca makes her an ideal reader of the work. Yearsley's poem is a direct response to Walpole's letter to Hannah

More written in November 1784 in which he scolds More for giving Yearsley a copy of his book because he believes she will not be able to read his novel in the spirit he wrote it⁸. Yearsley's poem gives Bianca a larger voice and she uses her to scold Walpole for dismissing the women and servants in the novel. In her poem, Yearsley says of Walpole, "Oh! With this noble Sorcerer ne'er converse,/ Fly, Stella, quickly from the magic storm;/ Or, soon he'll close thee in some high-plum'd hearse" (lines 85-87). Yearsley seems to identify Walpole with Manfred when he puts Theodore under the giant helmet in the first chapter. In support of Yearsley, Kahn also identifies Manfred with Walpole and argues that Walpole dismisses servants in *The Castle of Otranto* and while she uses Walpole's Prefaces and his letter to Hannah More to justify her claims she reads Walpole's defense of servants in the Preface as a dismissal. While I believe Kahn's claims are flawed, both she and Yearsley further Walpole's end of justifying the presence of servants in *The Castle of Otranto*.

Throughout *The Castle of Otranto*, Manfred dismisses his servants through interruptions; at first Manfred's interruptions appear to be a result of his impatience to learn what has taken place in the margins of the story, but upon closer inspection they have a more specific function. Manfred's insistent conversational dominance aims to both deny the truth of events and insist on his own importance. Manfred asserts his dominance over Bianca and the other domestics not because he is in denial of the prophecy they believe (and know) to be true, but because he does believe and can feel his hold on power waning. Manfred's unwarranted dismissals call into question the reliability of his servants; however, Manfred's denials and refusal to hear and work with his servants is

⁸ For more information about this correspondence see Frank 296.

ultimately what results in the collapse of Otranto Castle. When Otranto collapses, it retroactively shows that the servants were reliable all along and thus makes them available as interpreters and sites of identification well after the fact. Because Walpole dedicates space in his Prefaces to defending his servants it is curious that his main character would dismiss them, raising questions about how Walpole's representation of dismissal contributes to the art he wishes to accomplish with *The Castle of Otranto*.

PART FOUR

I CANNOT BUT BELIEVE, THAT THE GROUND WORK OF THE STORY IS FOUNDED ON TRUTH

(In which I discuss Manfred's perhaps immoderate dismissals and draw parallels to Voltaire.)

When reading *The Castle of Otranto*, the reader might first believe they are supposed to identify with Manfred; however, several times throughout the novel the reader is asked to identify with the servants in order to fill narrative gaps, putting us in a unique position to sympathize with them when Manfred criticizes and dismisses these characters. If Walpole defends these characters in his Prefaces it is curious why his main character dismisses these characters so readily, raising further questions about the purpose of Walpole's art, specifically his intentions of creating suspense. Throughout *Otranto*, Walpole uses servants in both traditional and innovative ways to further his narrative; if the reader takes Manfred's dismissal of these servants as a given, *The Castle of Otranto* becomes a literary exhibition of the servant character's role in narrative that shows the reader what happens when they are dismissed, as Walpole implies Voltaire does in the second Preface. While this thesis finds itself among critics who use Walpole's prefaces as cues for what themes to look for in his story and critics who seek to understand how Shakespeare inspired *The Castle of Otranto*, I challenge critics like Carol Dole who use Shakespearian allusion to argue that Manfred is based on King George III.

Some critics of *The Castle of Otranto* look to Walpole's mention of Shakespeare in the Preface to the second edition and his other works to point to Walpole's borrowing of scenes and motifs from a number of Shakespearean plays. Carol Dole provides

extensive evidence from Walpole's personal life and other works⁹ to argue Walpole based Manfred on King George III, Leontes, and Henry VII. Dole, like other critics, takes a cue from the second Preface when Walpole says, "that great master of nature, Shakespeare" to point to Walpole's borrowing of scenes and motifs from a number of Shakespearian plays. Unlike the critics mentioned above, I do not intend to argue that Manfred is based on any one Shakespeare play or person; however, I do draw parallels between Voltaire's dismissal of Shakespeare's "natural" characters and Manfred's dismissal of his servants.

In Walpole's second Preface, he is concerned that critics will not understand the purpose of creating characters that speak and act naturally; however, his main focus seems to be on Voltaire's critique of true-to-life characters and claim that mixing comedy and tragedy is "intolerable" (67) and "artless" (69). Walpole heavily implies that Voltaire dismisses Shakespeare's gravediggers in *Hamlet*, and indeed Manfred's dismissal of servants throughout *The Castle of Otranto* can be read as reminiscent of Voltaire's dismissal with which Walpole is so concerned. I argue that Manfred's heroic language, his dismissals of servants, and his inevitable fall from grace work to critique the boastful language, what Walpole considers the "absurd dialogue," used in old romances (66) thus advocating for Walpole's own use of "true-to-life" characters.

While Manfred dismisses his servants several times throughout *The Castle of Otranto*, the most forceful of these can be found in Chapter Five when he wants to prevent Bianca from revealing private information to Frederic. Walpole takes an opportunity to mirror Voltaire's dismissal of the hybridity of comedy and tragedy as

⁹ In Walpole's *Historic Doubts on the Life and Reign of King Richard III* (1768) he compares Henry VII to Leontes from Shakespeare's *A Winter's Tale*, Anne Boleyn to Hermione, and Anne's stillborn son to Mamillius.

intolerable (67) when Manfred says, “This trifling is intolerable. Let us dismiss this silly wench, my lord: we have more important affairs to discuss” (154). Manfred tries to dismiss Bianca by implying her words are nonsense and unimportant when compared to his and Frederic’s. However, the reader knows that Bianca’s words are important and simultaneously recap the events of the novel and foreshadow its ending. Like the gravediggers in *Hamlet*, Bianca’s trifling is more than it seems; as I discussed in my first analysis of this scene Walpole uses Bianca’s terror to excuse her from the ramifications of criticizing Manfred in front of an outsider. In response to Manfred’s dismissal, Frederic says, “these are no trifles: the enormous sabre I was directed to in the wood; yon casque its fellow,” implying that he understands Bianca’s reaction and the importance of her words. When Manfred tries to dismiss Bianca again, Frederic says, “This is more than just fancy, her terror is too natural and too strongly impressed to be the work of imagination” (153). Here, Walpole uses Frederic to speak directly to the reader and takes another opportunity to defend his servants’ actions as natural. When Frederic does not dismiss Bianca it is an acknowledgement to the reader that we should be more accepting of her as well.

Bianca’s scene in Chapter Five is a turning point for the reader because we realize the servants have been right about most things throughout the story and Manfred’s dismissals of them has only advanced the catastrophe. Frederic listens to Bianca’s warnings and does not agree to the double marriage and ultimately both he and Isabella are in good positions at the end of the novel. When viewed through this lens, *The Castle of Otranto* becomes a cautionary tale that urges readers to understand what servants bring to literature.

CONCLUSION

(In which I conclude.)

This thesis began as an attempt to understand why Walpole has Manfred dismiss the servants in *The Castle of Otranto* so forcefully. When I began my research I was under the impression that, like Manfred, Walpole dismisses servants and used his Prefaces to apologize to his reader for the space servants occupy in his novel. After spending a considerable amount of time with Walpole's Prefaces I began to understand the tone he uses, and determined that while he does regard servant characters as naïve, foolish, and full of foibles, he does not dismiss them as I originally thought. Walpole uses servant characters and the "natural" language and actions he attributes to them throughout *The Castle of Otranto* to organically create a tension that critiques other characters, comments on domestic life, foreshadows events in the novel, and ultimately defends a place for such characters in literature.

I began my discussion of *The Castle of Otranto* with Walpole's Prefaces because of the attention they received from other critics and because they offer valuable insight into Walpole's intentions for his work. Walpole's Prefaces naturally, no air quotes here, lead me to question whether his servants lived up to the claims he makes in the Prefaces, and as I conclude they do "discover many passages" and "advance the catastrophe." My discussion of servants was heavily focused on Bianca because she is the only servant Walpole names that appears in multiple scenes, but ultimately my discussion focused on her because she more fully realizes Walpole's intentions of using "true-to-life" characters to create tension than the other servant characters in the novel, but that did not mean I could leave the others out. I included a discussion of the other servants in the novel to

show that they act as sites of identification for the reader and how we are asked to sympathize with servant characters within the first few lines of the novel and throughout the rest of the story. It is this sympathy that makes Manfred's dismissals of his servants and their actions all the more personal. As Walpole proves, dismissing servants and, God forbid, Shakespeare as artless is personal for him. While I initially intended to include a lengthy discussion of Manfred's dismissals in this thesis, I did not have to prove that he dismissed his servants and I did not have to prove why. By taking Manfred's dismissals as a given I was able to fast track my discussion of what Walpole was doing with his representation of dismissals. This led me back to his second Preface and Voltaire.

Since this is a thesis and not a book, there was only so much I could include in my discussion of *The Castle of Otranto*. Because many critics before me have written about Shakespeare's influence on *The Castle of Otranto*, I felt that my thesis would be better served to discuss aspects of the novel that have not been given as much attention and I was not about to launch into a discussion of Shakespeare given that the members of my committee would defend him as passionately as Walpole himself. However, if I did have the space to discuss Shakespeare, I would begin by examining the gravediggers in *Hamlet* and the Roman citizens in *Julius Caesar*. Walpole mentions these plays specifically in his second Preface as models for his own characters so I would begin by discussing how Shakespeare's characters argue for the hybridity of comedy and tragedy and then compare how Walpole's characters measure up to "the great master of nature." If I did this I would then have to discuss if and how Shakespeare uses recognizable stereotypes to portray character's nature.

After concluding this thesis, I argue that I have given Walpole's servants the attention that his Prefaces demand and have more thoroughly defended the hybridity of comedy and tragedy than Walpole does in his Prefaces.

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