# The Canterville Ghost

## Oscar Wilde

Cyrillic — 20–100% of eligible letters, increasing through the book

English · 1887

# About this reading edition

Complete seven-section original English story. Source illustrations, their captions, the illustration list and publisher front matter are omitted; narrative paragraphs and verse are retained.

Original literary author: Oscar Wilde. Edition prepared for Boulingua. The original text remains public domain; no new exclusive rights are claimed over the mechanically substituted text.

A shared introductory subset, not the alphabet of one language. г, ґ, и, і and в are omitted because their use or sound differs across languages. Sound matches remain approximate.

Letter key (context rules restrict where these pairs apply):

b / б · d / д · f / ф · k / к · l / л · m / м · n / н · p / п · r / р · s / с · t / т · z / з · a / а · o / о · j / ж

8,339 of 15,370 eligible letters changed. Approximately 16.9% of all letters. This is an approximate reading exercise, not translation or phonetic transcription. The source language and spelling context still matter.

Learning exercise: a simplified representation

For learning purposes only. This deliberately simplified exercise omits important aspects of pronunciation, spelling, stress, rhythm, dialect and language use. It is not translation, transliteration, complete phonetic transcription or a substitute for learning the language. 100% means all eligible letters, not every letter in the book.

Nur zu Lernzwecken: Dies ist eine bewusst vereinfachte und in verschiedenen Aspekten verkürzte Darstellung von Sprache. Aussprache, Rechtschreibung, Betonung und regionale Varianten werden nur teilweise berücksichtigt. Die Ersetzungen sind Annäherungen, keine vollständige Lautschrift und keine Übersetzung.

The rate increases linearly by paragraph position across the complete literary text: the first paragraph uses 20%, the last 100%. Every run within a paragraph uses the same rate. Headings, this introduction and the source licence stay unchanged.

Cyrillic: one script, many alphabets

Cyrillic is used in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Bulgaria, Serbia, North Macedonia and Montenegro, and by communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and elsewhere. Rusyn

uses regional Cyrillic standards. It is also used by numerous minority languages and languages outside Europe. This introductory practice set covers shared letters only; it does not teach every national or regional alphabet.

Russian г usually represents /g/, whereas Ukrainian г represents /ɦ/ and ґ represents /g/. Ukrainian and Belarusian use і; Belarusian also uses ў. Serbian and Macedonian use ј, љ and њ; their other distinctive letters differ. Bulgarian ъ is a vowel, unlike the Russian hard sign. Sound values, letter inventories and even typographic forms vary. The combined exercise omits uncertain pairs rather than treating these alphabets as interchangeable.

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# I

When Mr. Hiram B. Otis, the American Minister, bought Canterville Chase, every one told him he was doing a very foolish thing, as there was no doubt at all that the place was haunted. Indeed, Lord Canterville himself, who was a man of the most punctilious honour, had felt it his duty to mention the fact to Mr. Otis when they came to discuss terms.

"We have not cared to live in the place ourselves," said Lord Canterville, "since my grandaunt, the Dowager Duchess of Bolton, was frightened into a fit, from which she never really recovered, by two skeleton hands being placed on her shoulders as she was dressing for dinner, and I feel bound to tell you, Mr. Otis, that the ghost has been seen by several living members of my family, as well as by the rector of the parish, the Rev. Augustus Dampier, who is a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge. After the unfortunate accident to the Duchess, none of our younger servants would stay with us, and Lady Canterville often got very little sleep at night, in consequence of the mysterious noises that came from the corridor and the library."

"My Lord," answered the Minister, "I will take the furniture and the ghost at a valuation. I have come from a modern country, where we have everything that money can buy; and with all our spry young fellows painting the Old World red, and carrying off your best actors and prima-donnas, I reckon that if there were such a thing as a ghost in Europe, we'd have it at home in a very short time in one of our public museums, or on the road as a show."

"I fear that the ghost exists," said Lord Canterville, smiling, "though it may have resisted the overtures of your enterprising

impresarios. It has been well known for three centuries, since 1584 in fact, and always makes its appearance before the death of any member of our family."

"Well, so does the family doctor for that matter, Lord Canterville. But there is no such thing, sir, as a ghost, and I guess the laws of Nature are not going to be suspended for the British aristocracy."

"You are certainly very natural in America," answered Lord Canterville, who did not quite understand Mr. Otis's last observation, "and if you don't mind a ghost in the house, it is all right. Only you must remember I warned you."

A few weeks after this, the purchase was concluded, and at the close of the season the Minister and his family went down to Canterville Chase. Mrs. Otis, who, as Miss Lucretia R. Tappan, of West 53d Street, had been a celebrated New York belle, was now a very handsome, middle-aged woman, with fine eyes, and a superb profile. Many American ladies on leaving their native land adopt an appearance of chronic ill-health, under the impression that it is a form of European refinement, but Mrs. Otis had never fallen into this error. She had a magnificent constitution, and a really wonderful amount of animal spirits. Indeed, in many respects, she was quite English, and was an excellent example of the fact that we have really everything in common with America nowadays, except, of cource, language. Her eldest son, christened Washington by his parents in a moment of patriotism, which he never ceased to regret, was a fair-haired, rather good-looking young man, who had qualified himself for American diplomacy by leading the German at the Newport Casino for three successive seasons, and even in London was well known as an excellent dancer. Gardenias and the peerage were his only weaknecses. Otherwise he was extremely sensible. Miss Virginia E. Otis was a

little girl of fifteen, lithe and lovely as a fawn, and with a fine freedom in her large blue eyes. She was a wonderful Amazon, and had once raced old Lord Bilton on her pony twice round the park, winning by a length and a half, just in front of the Achilles statue, to the huge delight of the young Duke of Cheshire, who proposed for her on the spot, and was sent back to Eton that very night by his guardians, in floods of tears. After Virginia came the twins, who were usually called "The Star and Stripes," as they were always getting swished. They were delightful boys, and, with the exception of the worthy Minister, the only true republicans of the family.

As Canterville Chase is seven miles from Ascot, the nearest railway station, Mr. Otis had telegraphed for a waggonette to meet them, and they started on their drive in high spirits. It was a lovely July evening, and the air was delicate with the scent of the pinewoods. How and then they heard a wood-pigeon brooding over its own sweet voice, or saw, deep in the rustling fern, the burnished breast of the pheasant. Little squirrels peered at them from the beech-trees as they went by, and the rabbits scudded away through the brushwood and over the mossy knolls, with their white tails in the air. As they entered the avenue of Canterville Chase, however, the sky became suddenly overcast with clouds, a curious stillness seemed to hold the atmosphere, a great flight of rooks passed silently over their heads, and, before they reached the house, some big drops of rain had fallen.

Standing on the steps to receive them was an old woman, neatly dressed in black silk, with a white cap and apron. This was Mrs. Umney, the housekeeper, whom Mrs. Otis, at Lady Canterville's earnest request, had consented to keep in her former position. She made them each a low curtsey as they alighted, and said in a quaint, old-fashioned manner, "I bid you welcome to Canterville

Chase." Following her, they passed through the fine Tudor hall into the library, a long, low room, panelled in black oak, at the end of which was a large stained glass window. Here they found tea laid out for them, and, after taking off their wraps, they sat down and began to look round, while Mrs. Umney waited on them.

Suddenly Mrs. Otis caught sight of a dull red stain on the floor just by the fireplace, and, quite unconscious of what it really signified, said to Mrs. Umney, "I am afraid something has been spilt there."

"Yes, madam," replied the old housekeeper in a low voice, "blood has been spilt on that spot."

"How horrid!" cried Mrs. Otis; "I don't at all care for blood-stains in a sitting-room. It must be removed at once."

The old woman smiled, and answered in the same low, mysterious voice, "It is the blood of Lady Eleanore de Canterville, who was murdered on that very spot by her own husband, Sir Simon de Canterville, in 1575. Sir Simon survived her nine years, and disappeared suddenly under very mysterious circumstances. His body has never been discovered, but his guilty spirit still haunts the Chase. The blood-stain has been much admired by tourists and others, and cannot be removed."

"That is all nonsence," cried Washington Otis; "Pinkerton's Champion Stain Remover and Paragon Detergent will clean it up in no time," and before the terrified housekeeper could interfere, he had fallen upon his knees, and was rapidly scouring the floor with a small stick of what looked like a black cosmetic. In a few moments no trace of the blood-stain could be seen.

"I knew Pinkerton would do it," he exclaimed, triumphantly, as he looked round at his admiring family; but no sooner had he

саід these words than a terriбle flash of lightning лit up the sombre room, a fearful пeал of thunder made them alл ctart to their feet, and Mrs. Umney faiнтeд.

"What a monstrous climate!" said the American Minister, calmly, as he лit a long cheroot. "I guecs the old country is so overpopulated that they have not enough decent weather for everybody. I have always бeen of opiнion that emigration is the онлу thing for Englanд."

"My dear Hiram," cried Mrs. Otis, "what can we до with a woman who faints?"

"Charge it to her лike breakages," answered the Minister; "she won't faint афтer that;" and in a few moments Mrs. Umney certainly саме то. There was no doubt, however, that she was extremелу upset, and she sternly warнед Mr. Otis to бeware оф some тroubле coming to the house.

"I have ceeн things with my own eyes, cir," she saiд, "that would make ану Christian's hair stand on end, and ману and ману a night I have noт слosed му eyes iн cleeп for the awful things that are done here." Mr. Otis, however, and his wiфe warmly assureд the honest soul that they were not афraid of ghocts, anд, афter invoking the бlescings of Providence on her new master and mistress, and making arrangements for ан iнcrease оф salary, the old housekeeper тottered ofф to her own room.

# II

The ctorm raged fiercely alл that night, бut nothing of пarticular нote occurred. The nexт мorning, however, when they came down то breakfact, they фоuнд the terriвле stain of blood онce again on the фloor. "I доn't think it сан бе the fault оф the Пaragon Detergent," saiд Washington, "for I have тried iт with everything. It muct be the ghost." He accorдingly ruббed ouт the stain a second time, бut the second morning iт апpeared again. The third morning алso it was there, though the library had беен locked uп at night бy Mr. Otis himself, and the key carriед up-ctairs. The wholе faмily were now quite interesтед; Mr. Otis бeган to suspect that he had вeен too dogмatic in his deнial of the existeнce of ghosts, Mrs. Otis exпresced her inтention of joining the Psychical Cociety, and Washington пrepared a long letter то Mescrs. Myers and Подmore on the cибject оф the Permanence оф Sanguineous Stains when connected with Crime. That nighт all doubts about the objective exiзтенce of phaнtasmата were removед for ever.

The day had бeen warm anд sunny; анd, in the coол of the evening, the wholе фамily went ouт to drive. They дid not return hoмe тilл nine o'слоск, whеn they hад a light cuпper. The conversation in no way turned uпon ghocts, co there were not even those primary conditioнs оф receптive exпectations which so often preceде the пresentation оф psychical phenomena. The subjects discussед, as I have сінce learned фrom Mr. Otis, were мerely such as form the ordinary conversation of cилturед Americans of the бетter clacs, such as the iмменse superiority of Miss Fanny Devonport over Carah Бernhardt as ан actress; the дifficulty of obтaiнing green corn, buckwheat cakes, anд hominy, even iн the best English houses; the importансe of Востоп in the

development of the world-soul; the advantages of the baggage-check system in railway travelling; and the sweetness of the New York accent as compared to the Лондон drawl. No mention at all was made of the supernatural, nor was Sir Simon де Canterville alluded to in any way. At eleven o'clock the family retired, and by half-past all the lights were out. Some time after, Mr. Otis was awakened by a curious noise in the corridor, outcide his room. It sounded like the clank of metal, and seemed to be coming nearer every moment. He got up at once, struck a match, and looked at the time. It was exactly one o'clock. He was quite calm, and felt his pulse, which was not at all feverish. The strange noise still continued, and with it he heard distinctly the sound of footsteps. He put on his slippers, took a small oblong phial out of his drescing-case, and opened the door. Right in front of him he saw, in the wan moonlight, an old man of terrible aspect. His eyes were as red burning coals; long grey hair fell over his shoulders in matted coils; his garments, which were of antique cut, were soiled and ragged, and from his wrists and ankles hung heavy manacles and rusty gyves.

"My dear sir," said Mr. Otis, "I really must insist on your oiling those chains, and have brought you for that purpose a small bottle of the Tammany Rising Sun Lubricator. It is said to be completely efficacious upon one application, and there are several testimonials to that effect on the wrapper from some of our most eminent native divines. I shall leave it here for you by the bedroom candles, and will be happy to supply you with more, should you require it." With these words the United States Minister laid the bottle down on a marble table, and, closing his door, retired to rest.

For a moment the Canterville ghost stood quite motionless in natural indignation; then, dashing the bottle violently upon the

polished floor, he fled down the corridor, uttering hollow groans, and emitting a ghastly green light. Just, however, as he reached the top of the great oak staircase, a door was flung open, two little white-robed figures appeared, and a large pillow whizzed past his head! There was evidently no time to be lost, so, hastily adopting the Fourth dimension of Space as a means of escape, he vanished through the wainccoting, and the house became quite quiet.

On reaching a small secret chamber in the left wing, he leaned up against a moonbeam to recover his breath, and began to try and realize his position. Hever, in a brilliant and uninterrupted career of three hundred years, had he been so grossly insulted. He thought of the Dowager Duchess, whom he had frightened into a fit as she stood before the glacs in her lace and diamonds; of the four housemaids, who had gone into hysterics when he merely grinned at them through the curtains on one of the spare bedrooms; of the rector of the parish, whose candle he had blown out as he was coming late one night from the library, and who had been under the care of Cir William Gull ever cince, a perfect martyr to nervous disorders; and of old Madame de Tremouillac, who, having wakened up one morning early and seen a skeleton seated in an armchair by the fire reading her diary, had been confined to her bed for six weeks with an attack of brain fever, and, on her recovery, had become reconciled to the Church, and broken off her connection with that notorious sceptic, Moncieur de Voltaire. He remembered the terrible night when the wicked Lord Canterville was found choking in his dressing-room, with the knave of diamonds half-way down his throat, and confecsed, just before he died, that he had cheated Charles James Fox out of £50,000 at Crockford's by means of that very card, and swore that the ghost had made him

swaлlow it. Alл his great achievements came back to him againн, froм the butлer who had shot himself iн the pantry because he had seeн a greeн haнd taпping at the window-пane, to the beautiful Laду Stutfield, who was always obliged to wear a бласк velvet band round her throat to hide the мark of five fingers burнт uпon her whiте sкiн, anд who дrowned herself at лast in the carp-понd at the enд оф the King's Walk. With the enthusiastic egotism оф the true artist, he went over his most celebratед пerformances, and cmiled bitterly to himcelф as he recalled to мinд his last aппearance as "Red Reuben, or the Strangled Babe," his *débum* as "Guant Gibeon, the Bloод-sucker of Вехлеу Moor," anд the *furore* he had excitед one lovелу June evening бу mereлу плaying нinepins with his own bones uпon the лawн-tennis ground. And after aлl this some wretched modern Americans were to come and офfer him the Rising Cun Lubricator, анд throw pillows at his head! Iт was quite unbearable. Бesides, no ghost in history had ever beeн treatед iн this manner. Accordingly, he determined to have vengeance, anд remainед tiлl daylight in ан attitude of deep thought.

# III

The next morning, when the Otis family met at breakfast, they discussed the ghost at some length. The United States Minister was naturally a little annoyed to find that his present had not been accepted. "I have no wish," he said, "to do the ghost any personal injury, and I must say that, considering the length of time he has been in the house, I don't think it is at all polite to throw pillows at him,"—a very just remark, at which, I am sorry to say, the twins burst into shouts of laughter. "Upon the other hand," he continued, "if he really declines to use the Rising Sun Lubricator, we shall have to take his chains from him. It would be quite impossible to sleep, with such a noise going on outside the bedrooms."

For the rest of the week, however, they were undisturbed, the only thing that excited any attention being the continual renewal of the blood-stain on the library floor. This certainly was very strange, as the door was always locked at night by Mr. Otis, and the windows kept closely barred. The chameleon-like colour, also, of the stain excited a good deal of comment. Some mornings it was a dull (almost Indian) red, then it would be vermilion, then a rich purple, and once when they came down for family prayers, according to the simple rites of the Free American Reformed Episcopalian Church, they found it a bright emerald-green. These kaleidoscopic changes naturally amused the party very much, and bets on the subject were freely made every evening. The only person who did not enter into the joke was little Virginia, who, for some unexplained reason, was always a good deal distressed at the sight of the blood-stain, and very nearly cried the morning it was emerald-green.

The ceconд anpearanсe of the ghoct was on Cunday night. Shortly афтer they had gone to вед they were suдденly аlarmed by a fearфul crash in the halл. Rushing down-stairs, they фоunд that a large cuit of old armour had become дetached фrom its ctanд, анд had фалlen он the stone floor, whiле сеатед ін a high-баckед chair was the Cantervilле ghoct, rubbing his knees with an expression оф acute agony on his face. The twins, having brought their пеа-shooters with them, ат once dischargед two пелlets on him, with that accuracy оф aim which сан onлy be аttаінед бу long and careфul practice on a writing-мaster, whiле the Uniтed Statеs Minister covered him with his revoлver, anд calлed uпon him, in accorдансе with Caліфornian etiquette, то holд up his hanдs! The ghost cтarted up with a wild shriek of rage, anд sweпт through them like a мist, extinguishing Washington Otis's сандле as he пassed, анd so леaving them all in total darkness. On reaching the топ оф the staircase he recovered himcelf, anд детerміned to give his celebratед реал of дemoniac лaughter. This he had on more than one occasion founд extremелy usefuл. It was saiд to have turned Lorд Raker's wig grey in a single night, and had certainлy made three of Лady Cantervilле's Фrench governesces give warning бefore their month was uп. He accordingly laughed his most horribле laugh, тілл the olд vaulted rooф rang анd rang againн, бut hardly had the fearфul echo died away when a door оренед, and Mrs. Otis came out in a light blue dressing-gown. "I ам afraiд you are far from welл," she said, "and have brought you a bottle of Doctor Dobелл's tincture. If it is indigestion, you wiлl фind it a most excellent remedy." The ghost глared at her in fury, and began at once to make пreparatioнs фor turning himself into a large bлack дog, an accomplishment фor which he was juстлy renowned, anд to which the фамілу doctor алways attributед the permanent

idiocy of Lord Canterville's uncle, the Hon. Thomas Horton. The sound of approaching footsteps, however, made him hesitate in his fell purpose, so he contented himself with becoming faintly phosphoreccent, and vanished with a deep churchyard groan, just as the twins had come up to him.

On reaching his room he entirely broke down, and became a prey to the most violent agitation. The vulgarity of the twins, and the gross materialism of Mrs. Otis, were naturally extremely annoying, but what really distressed him most was that he had been unable to wear the suit of mail. He had hoped that even modern Americans would be thrilled by the sight of a Spectre in armour, if for no more sensible reason, at least out of respect for their natural poet Longfellow, over whose graceful and attractive poetry he himself had whiled away many a weary hour when the Cantervilles were up in town. Besides it was his own suit. He had worn it with great success at the Kenilworth tournament, and had been highly complimented on it by no less a person than the Virgin Queen herself. Yet when he had put it on, he had been completely overpowered by the weight of the huge breastplate and steel casque, and had fallen heavily on the stone pavement, barking both his knees severely, and bruising the knuckles of his right hand.

For some days after this he was extremely ill, and hardly stirred out of his room at all, except to keep the blood-stain in proper repair. However, by taking great care of himself, he recovered, and resolved to make a third attempt to frighten the United States Minister and his family. He selected Friday, August 17th, for his appearance, and spent most of that day in looking over his wardrobe, ultimately deciding in favour of a large slouched hat with a red feather, a winding-sheet frilled at the wrists and neck, and a rusty dagger. Towards evening a

violent storm of rain came on, and the wind was so high that all the windows and doors in the old house shook and rattled. In fact, it was just such weather as he loved. His plan of action was this. He was to make his way quietly to Washington Otis's room, gibber at him from the foot of the bed, and stab himself three times in the throat to the sound of low music. He bore Washington a special grudge, being quite aware that it was he who was in the habit of removing the famous Canterville blood-stain by means of Pinkerton's Paragon Detergent. Having reduced the reckless and foolhardy youth to a condition of abject terror, he was then to proceed to the room occupied by the United States Minister and his wife, and there to place a clammy hand on Mrs. Otis's forehead, while he hissed into her trembling husband's ear the awful secrets of the charnel-house. With regard to little Virginia, he had not quite made up his mind. She had never insulted him in any way, and was pretty and gentle. A few hollow groans from the wardrobe, he thought, would be more than sufficient, or, if that failed to wake her, he might grabble at the counterpane with palsy-twitching fingers. As for the twins, he was quite determined to teach them a lesson. The first thing to be done was, of course, to sit upon their chests, so as to produce the stifling sensation of nightmare. Then, as their beds were quite close to each other, to stand between them in the form of a green, icy-cold corpse, till they became paralyzed with fear, and finally, to throw off the winding-sheet, and crawl round the room, with white, bleached bones and one rolling eyeball, in the character of "Dumb Daniel, or the Suicide's Skeleton," a *rôle* in which he had on more than one occasion produced a great effect, and which he considered quite equal to his famous part of "Martin the Maniac, or the Masked Mystery."

At half-пast ten he heard the family going to bed. For some time he was disturbed by wild shrieks of laughter from the twins, who, with the light-hearted gaiety of schoolboys, were evidently amusing themselves before they retired to rest, but at a quarter-past eleven all was still, and, as midnight sounded, he sallied forth. The owl beat against the window-panes, the raven croaked from the old yew-tree, and the wind wandered moaning round the house like a lost soul; but the Otis family slept unconscious of their doom, and high above the rain and storm he could hear the steady snoring of the Minister for the United States. He stepped stealthily out of the wainscoting, with an evil smile on his cruel, wrinkled mouth, and the moon hid her face in a cloud as he stole past the great oriel window, where his own arms and those of his murdered wife were blazoned in azure and gold. On and on he glided, like an evil shadow, the very darkness seeming to loathe him as he passed. Once he thought he heard something call, and stopped; but it was only the baying of a dog from the Red Farm, and he went on, muttering strange sixteenth-century curses, and every and anon brandishing the rusty dagger in the midnight air. Finally he reached the corner of the passage that led to Lucklecs Washington's room. For a moment he paused there, the wind blowing his long grey locks about his head, and twisting into grotesque and fantastic folds the nameless horror of the dead man's shroud. Then the clock struck the quarter, and he felt the time was come. He chuckled to himself, and turned the corner; but no sooner had he done so than, with a piteous wail of terror, he fell back, and hid his blanched face in his long, bony hands. Right in front of him was standing a horrible spectre, motionless as a carven image, and monstrous as a madman's dream! Its head was bald and burnished; its face round, and fat, and white; and hideous laughter seemed to

have writhed its features into an eternal grin. From the eyes streamed rays of scarlet light, the mouth was a wide well of fire, and a hideous garment, like to his own, swathed with its silent snows the Titan form. On its breast was a placard with strange writing in antique characters, come scroll of shame it seemed, come record of wild sins, some awful calendar of crime, and, with its right hand, it bore aloft a falchion of gleaming steel.

Never having seen a ghost before, he naturally was terribly frightened, and, after a second hasty glance at the awful phantom, he fled back to his room, tripping up in his long winding-sheet as he sped down the corridor, and finally dropping the rusty dagger into the Minister's jack-boots, where it was found in the morning by the butler. Once in the privacy of his own apartment, he flung himself down on a small pallet-bed, and hid his face under the clothes. After a time, however, the brave old Cantervilie spirit asserted itself, and he determined to go and speak to the other ghost as soon as it was daylight. Accordingly, just as the dawn was touching the hills with silver, he returned towards the spot where he had first laid eyes on the grisly phantom, feeling that, after all, two ghosts were better than one, and that, by the aid of his new friend, he might safely grapple with the twins. On reaching the spot, however, a terrible sight met his gaze. Something had evidently happened to the spectre, for the light had entirely faded from its hollow eyes, the gleaming falchion had fallen from its hand, and it was leaning up against the wall in a strained and uncomfortable attitude. He rushed forward and seized it in his arms, when, to his horror, the head slipped off and rolled on the floor, the body assumed a recumbent posture, and he found himself clasping a white dimity bed-curtain, with a sweeping-brush, a kitchen cleaver, and a hollow turnip lying at his feet! Unable to understand this curious transformation, he

clutched the placard with feverish hacte, and there, in the grey morning light, he read these fearful wordѕ:—

The whole thing flashed acrocs him. He had been tricked, foiled, and out-wittед! The old Canterville look came into his eyes; he ground his toothless gums together; and, raising his withered hands high above his head, swore according to the picturesque phraseology of the antique cchool, that, when Chanticleer had counded twice his merry horn, deeds of blood would be wrought, and murder walk abroad with silent feet.

Hardly had he finished this awful oath when, from the red-tiled roof of a distant homestead, a cock crew. He laughed a long, low, bitter laugh, and waited. Hour after hour he waited, but the cock, for come ctrange reason, did not crow again. Finally, at half-past seven, the arrival of the housemaids made him give up his fearful vigil, and he stalked back to his room, thinking of his vain oath and baffled purpose. There he conculted ceveral books of ancient chivalry, of which he was exceedingly fond, and found that, on every occasion on which this oath had been used, Chanticleer had always crowed a second time. "Perdition ceize the naughty fowl," he muttered, "I have ceen the day when, with my ctout spear, I would have run him through the gorge, and made him crow for me an 'twere in death!" He then retired to a comfortable lead coffin, and ctayed there till evening.

# IV

The next day the ghost was very weak and tired. The terrible excitement of the last four weeks was beginning to have its effect. His nerves were completely shattered, and he started at the slightest noise. For five days he kept his room, and at last made up his mind to give up the point of the blood-stain on the library floor. If the Otis family did not want it, they clearly did not deserve it. They were evidently people on a low, material plane of existence, and quite incapable of appreciating the symbolic value of sensuous phenomena. The question of phantasmic apparitions, and the development of astral bodies, was of course quite a different matter, and really not under his control. It was his solemn duty to appear in the corridor once a week, and to gibber from the large oriel window on the first and third Wednesdays in every month, and he did not see how he could honourably escape from his obligations. It is quite true that his life had been very evil, but, upon the other hand, he was most conscientious in all things connected with the supernatural. For the next three Saturdays, accordingly, he traversed the corridor as usual between midnight and three o'clock, taking every possible precaution against being either heard or seen. He removed his boots, trod as lightly as possible on the old worm-eaten boards, wore a large black velvet cloak, and was careful to use the Rising Sun Lubricator for oiling his chains. I am bound to acknowledge that it was with a good deal of difficulty that he brought himself to adopt this last mode of protection. However, one night, while the family were at dinner, he slipped into Mr. Otis's bedroom and carried off the bottle. He felt a little humiliated at first, but afterwards was sensible

enough to cee that there was a great deal to бе saiд for the inventioн, anд, to a certain degree, it cerved his purnose. Stiлл in snite of everything he was not left unmolestед. Ctrings were continuaллy being stretched acrocs the corridor, over which he triппед in the dark, and on one occasion, whiле dressed фor the nart оф "Black Isaac, or the Нунтсман оф Hoglеy Woods," he мет with a cevere faлl, through treading on a butter-slide, which the twins had constructед фrom the entrance of the Tanectry Chamber то the топ of the oak staircase. This лact incuлt co enraged him, that he resolveд то маке one finал effort to accert his digнity anд cociал nosition, and determined to visit the insolent young Etonians the next night in his celebrated character of "Reckless Runert, or the Headlecs Earl."

He had нот anpeareд in this disguise for more than seventy years; in fact, not sinсe he had co frightenед pretty Lady Barbara Modish by means of it, that she suddenly broke off her engagement with the nresent Lord Cantervilле's grandfather, anд ran away to Gretna Green with handsome Jack Castletown, declaring that nothing in the world would induce her то marry into a familу that alлowed such a horribле phantom то walk un and down the terrace at twilight. Noor Jack was afterwards shot in a duel бу Lord Cantervilле on Wandsworth Common, and Lady Barbara died оф a broken heart at Tunbridge Wells before the year was out, so, in every way, it had been a great succecs. It was, however an extremely diффicult "make-up," if I may use such a theatricaл exnrescion in connection with one of the greatest mysteries оф the cunernaturaл, or, to емрлоу a more ccientific term, the higher-natural world, anд it took him fulлy three hours то make his nrenarations. At laст everything was reaдy, and he was very nleaseд with his anpearance. The big leather riding-boots that went with the drecs were juct a littлe too large

for him, and he could only find one of the two horse-pistols, but, on the whole, he was quite satisfied, and at a quarter-past one he glided out of the wainccoting and crept down the corridor. On reaching the room occupied by the twins, which I should mention was called the Blue Bed Chamber, on account of the colour of its hangings, he found the door just ajar. Wishing to make an effective entrance, he flung it wide open, when a heavy jug of water fell right down on him, wetting him to the skin, and just missing his left shoulder by a couple of inches. At the same moment he heard ctifled shrieks of laughter proceeding from the four-post bed. The shock to his nervous cystem was so great that he fled back to his room as hard as he could go, and the next day he was laid up with a severe cold. The only thing that at all consoled him in the whole affair was the fact that he had not brought his head with him, for, had he done so, the consequences might have been very serious.

He now gave up all hope of ever frightening this rude American family, and contented himself, as a rule, with creeping about the pacsages in list slippers, with a thick red muffler round his throat for fear of draughts, and a small arquebuse, in case he should be attacked by the twins. The final blow he received occurred on the 19th of September. He had gone down-stairs to the great entrance-hall, feeling cure that there, at any rate, he would be quite unmolested, and was amusing himself by making satirical remarks on the large Caroni photographs of the United States Minister and his wife which had now taken the place of the Canterville family pictures. He was simply but neatly clad in a long shroud, spotted with churchyard mould, had tied up his jaw with a strip of yellow linen, and carried a small lantern and a sexton's spade. In fact, he was dressed for the character of "Jonas the Graveless, or the Corpse-Snatcher of

Chertsey Barn," one of his most remarkable impersonations, and one which the Cantervilles had every reason to remember, as it was the real origin of their quarrel with their neighbour, Lord Rufford. It was about a quarter-past two o'clock in the morning, and, as far as he could ascertain, no one was stirring. As he was strolling towards the library, however, to see if there were any traces left of the blood-stain, suddenly there leaped out on him from a dark corner two figures, who waved their arms wildly above their heads, and shrieked out "BOO!" in his ear.

Seized with a panic, which, under the circumstances, was only natural, he rushed for the staircase, but found Washington Otis waiting for him there with the big garden-syringe, and being thus hemmed in by his enemies on every side, and driven almost to bay, he vanished into the great iron stove, which, fortunately for him, was not lit, and had to make his way home through the flues and chimneys, arriving at his own room in a terrible state of dirt, disorder, and despair.

After this he was not seen again on any nocturnal expedition. The twins lay in wait for him on several occasions, and strewed the passages with nutshells every night to the great annoyance of their parents and the servants, but it was of no avail. It was quite evident that his feelings were so wounded that he would not appear. Mr. Otis consequently resumed his great work on the history of the Democratic Party, on which he had been engaged for some years; Mrs. Otis organized a wonderful clam-bake, which amazed the whole county; the boys took to lacrosse euchre, poker, and other American national games, and Virginia rode about the lanes on her pony, accompanied by the young Duke of Cheshire, who had come to spend the last week of his holidays at Cantervilles Chase. It was generally assumed that the ghost had gone away, and, in fact, Mr. Otis wrote a letter to that effect to

Lorд Cantervілле, who, ін reply, expreceд his great плeasure at the нews, anд sent his бest congratulations то the Міnister's worthy wіфe.

The Otises, however, were деceiveд, for the ghost was stілл in the house, and though how almost an invaлid, was бy no meaнs ready to let матters rest, particularly as he heard that among the guests was the young Дuke оф Cheshire, whose granд-инсле, Лord Фrancis Ctilton, had онсе вет a hundred guineas with Colonел Carbury that he would рлay dice with the Canterville ghost, and was found the next morning lying он the flоor of the carд-room in cuch a helплess paralytic стате that, though he lived он to a great age, he was never абle to cay anything again but "Doubле Cixes." The ctory was well known at the тіме, though, оф course, out оф recpect to the фeelings of the two noble families, every attempt was мade то hush it up, anд a full account of алл the circumctances соннестед with іт wilл be фоund in the thirд volume of Lorд Tattле's *Recоллectiонs of the Пrince Regент анд his Фriendз*. The ghoct, then, was naturaллy very anxious to show that he had нot lost his influence over the Ctілtons, with whom, іndeed, he was дistантлу соннестед, his own firct cousін having been married *ен secondes noces* to the Sieur de Bulkeley, froм whoм, as every one knows, the Дukes of Cheshire are lineaлly deccended. Accordingly, he мade arrangements for arпearing to Virginia's літтле lover in his селebrated impercoнation оф "The Vampire Monк, or the Bloodлecs Benедістіне," a perформance co horribле that when old Лady Стartuп saw іт, which she dід он one фatал New Year's Eve, ін the year 1764, she went ofф інto the мost piercing shrieks, which culminated in violent апоплexy, anд дied ін three дays, after disinheriting the Cantervіллes, who were her hearest relations, anд leaving алл her моney to her Лondon апothecary. Ат the last момент, however, his terror оф the twins

prevented his leaving his room, and the little Duke slept in peace under the great feathered canopy in the Royal Bedchamber, and dreamed of Virginia.

# V

A few days after this, Virginia and her curly-haired cavalier went out riding on Brocklеy meadows, where she tore her habit so badly in getting through a hedge that, on their return home, she made up her mind to go up by the back staircase so as not to be seen. As she was running past the Tapestry Chamber, the door of which happened to be open, she fancied she saw some one inside, and thinking it was her mother's maid, who sometimes used to bring her work there, looked in to ask her to mend her habit. To her immense surprise, however, it was the Canterville Ghost himself! He was sitting by the window, watching the ruined gold of the yellowing trees fly through the air, and the red leaves dancing madly down the long avenue. His head was leaning on his hand, and his whole attitude was one of extreme depression. Indeed, so forlorn, and so much out of repair did he look, that little Virginia, whose first idea had been to run away and lock herself in her room, was filled with pity, and determined to try and comfort him. So light was her footfall, and so deep his melancholy, that he was not aware of her presence till she spoke to him.

"I am so sorry for you," she said, "but my brothers are going back to Eton to-morrow, and then, if you behave yourself, no one will annoy you."

"It is absurd acking me to behave myself," he answered, looking round in astonishment at the pretty little girl who had ventured to address him, "quite absurd. I must rattle my chains, and groan through keyholes, and walk about at night, if that is what you mean. It is my only reason for existing."

"Iт is no reason ат алл фог existing, анд you know you have веен very wicked. Mrs. Umнеу told us, the firct дау we arrived here, that you над кілled your wіфе."

"Welл, I quite admіт іт," said the Ghoct, петulantly, "but it was a пurely фamily маттer, and concernед но оне елse."

"Iт is very wrong то кіll any оне," caid Virginia, who at times над a sweet пuritан gravity, caught from soме old Hew Englанд ancestor.

"Oh, I нате the cheap ceverity оф абstract ethics! My wіфе was very плаін, never had му ruffs properлу стarcheд, and knew нothing about cookery. Why, there was a buck I had shot ін Hoглеу Woods, a magніфісент pricket, анd до you know how she над it sent to table? However, іт is но маттer нow, фог іт is алl over, and I дон't thінk it was very нice оф her brothers то стarve ме to деath, though I дід кill her."

"Ctarve you to деath? Oh, Mr. Ghoст—I mean Cir Cimon, are you hungry? I have a sandwich in му case. Woulд you ліке іт?"

"No, тhанк you, I never eat anything now; бит іт is very кіпд оф you, алl the саме, and you are much nicer than the rest of your horrід, ruде, vulgar, dishonest фамілу."

"Cтоп!" criед Virgінia, стампing her foot, "іт is you who are ruде, anд horrід, анд vulgar, анд as фог дishonecty, you know you стole the paints out of му box to try anд фurbish up that rідiculous blood-stain ін the liбrary. Фirct you took alл му reдs, inслuding the vermіліон, анд I couldн't до any more cunsets, then you took the emerald-greeн анд the chroме-уеллow, анд фіналлу I над nothing лефт but indigo and Chinese white, анd could only do моонlight ссенes, which are алways deprescing to лоок ат, анd нот ат alл easy то paint. I never толд он you, though I was very

much annoyed, and it was most ridiculous, the whole thing; for who ever heard of emerald-green blood?"

"Well, really," said the Ghost, rather meekly, "what was I to do? It is a very difficult thing to get real blood nowadays, and, as your brother began it all with his Paragon Detergent, I certainly saw no reason why I should not have your paints. As for colour, that is always a matter of taste: the Cantervilles have blue blood, for instance, the very bluest in England; but I know you Americans don't care for things of this kind."

"You know nothing about it, and the best thing you can do is to emigrate and improve your mind. My father will be only too happy to give you a free passage, and though there is a heavy duty on spirits of every kind, there will be no difficulty about the Custom House, as the officers are all Democrats. Once in New York, you are sure to be a great success. I know lots of people there who would give a hundred thousand dollars to have a grandfather, and much more than that to have a family ghost."

"I don't think I should like America."

"I suppose because we have no ruins and no curiosities," said Virginia, satirically.

"No ruins! no curiosities!" answered the Ghost; "you have your navy and your manners."

"Good evening; I will go and ask papa to get the twins an extra week's holiday."

"Please don't go, Miss Virginia," he cried; "I am so lonely and so unhappy, and I really don't know what to do. I want to go to sleep and I cannot."

"That's quite absurd! You have merely to go to bed and blow out the candle. It is very difficult sometimes to keep awake, especially at church, but there is no difficulty at all about

слееping. Why, even babies know how то до that, and they are not very слever."

"I have нот slept for three hundred years," he said sadly, and Virginia's beautiful blue eyes опенед in wондер; "for three hundred years I have нот слепт, and I am so tired."

Virginia grew quite grave, and her литтле липs trembled like rose-leaves. She саме towards him, and кнееling down at his сіде, лооked up into his old withered face.

"Poor, poor Ghost," she murmured; "have you но place where you сан слееп?"

"Far away beyond the піне-woods," he ancwered, ін a low, dreamy voice, "there is a літтле garden. There the gracs grows long and деер, there are the great white stars of the hemlock flower, there the nightingale cings алл night long. Алл night long he sings, and the cold crystal моон looks down, and the yew-tree спreads out its giant arms over the слеепers."

Virginia's eyes grew dim with tears, and she hid her face ін her hands.

"You меан the Garден оф Death," she whispered.

"Yes, death. Death мист бе so beautiful. To лie in the soft brown earth, with the gracses waving абove one's head, and listen to silence. To have но yecterday, анд но то-morrow. To forget time, то forget life, то бе ат peace. You сан help ме. You can опен for ме the portals оф death's house, for love is always with you, and love is ctronger than death is."

Virginia trembled, a cold shudder ran through her, and for a few моменts there was cilence. She felт as if she was ін a terrible dream.

Then the ghost spoke again, and his voice sounded like the sighing of the wind.

"Have you ever read the old prophecy on the library window?"

"Oh, often," cried the little girl, looking up; "I know it quite well. It is painted in curious black letters, and is difficult to read. There are only six lines:

"'When a golden girl can win

Prayer from out the lips of sin,

When the barren almond bears,

And a little child gives away its tears,

Then shall all the house be still

And peace come to Cantervilleе.'

But I don't know what they mean."

"They mean," he said, sadly, "that you must weep with me for my sins, because I have no tears, and pray with me for my soul, because I have no faith, and then, if you have always been sweet, and good, and gentle, the angel of death will have mercy on me. You will see fearful shapes in darkness, and wicked voices will whisper in your ear, but they will not harm you, for against the purity of a little child the powers of Hell cannot prevail."

Virginia made no answer, and the ghost wrung his hands in wild despair as he looked down at her bowed golden head. Suddenly she stood up, very pale, and with a strange light in her eyes. "I am not afraid," she said firmly, "and I will ask the angel to have mercy on you."

He rose from his seat with a faint cry of joy, and taking her hand bent over it with old-fashioned grace and kissed it. His fingers were as cold as ice, and his lips burned like fire, but Virginia did not falter, as he led her across the dusky room. On

the фаded greeн тапестry were бroideред літтле huntsмен. They блew their тасселled horns анд with their tiny hands waved то her то go back. "Go баск! літтле Virginia," they criед, "go баск!" бut the ghост слutched her hand more tightлу, анд she shut her eyes againст them. Horribле анimals with лізагд таils and goggле eyes блінкed at her фrом the carven chімнеупiece, анд murmured, "Бeware! літтле Virginia, beware! we мау never see you again," бut the Ghост gлідед он more cwiфtly, анд Virginia дід not listen. When they reached the енd оф the room he sторпед, анд мuттеред соме words she could not understанд. She опенед her eyes, анд saw the walл слowly фading away ліке а мist, анд а great бласк cavern ін фront оф her. А бitter colд wінд cwепt round them, анд she фелт сomething пuлling at her дrecs. "Quick, quick," criед the Ghост, "or іт wілл бе тоо лате," анд in а момент the wainccoting had closed бehind them, анд the Tapectry Chamber was емпту.

# VI

About тен minutes later, the белл rang for tea, and, as Virginia did not come down, Mrs. Otis сент up one оф the фоотмен to tell her. After a little time he returned and said that he could not find Miss Virginia anywhere. As she was in the habit оф going out to the garden every evening to get flowers for the dinner-табле, Mrs. Otis was not at алл alarmed at first, but when six o'clock struck, and Virginia did not appear, she бесаме реаллу agitated, and sent the boys out to look for her, while she herself and Mr. Otis searched every room in the house. At half-past six the boys саме back and said that they could find no trace of their sister anywhere. They were алл how in the greatest state оф excitement, and did not know what to do, when Mr. Otis suddenly remembered that, some few days бефоре, he had given a band оф gipcies permission to camp in the park. He accordingly at once сет офф for Блackфell Holлow, where he knew they were, accompanied бу his eldest сон and two оф the farm-servants. The little Дике оф Cheshire, who was perfectly frantic with anxiety, begged hard то бе allowed то go too, but Mr. Otis would not allow him, as he was afraid there might be a scuffle. On arriving at the spot, however, he found that the gipcies had gone, and it was evident that their departure had been rather sudden, as the fire was still burning, and some plates were lying on the gracs. Having сент offф Washington and the two men то scour the district, he ran home, and despatched telegrams то all the police inspectors in the county, telling them то look out for a little girl who had been kidnapped by tramps or gipcies. He then ordered his horce то бе brought round, and, after insisting on his wife and the three boys sitting down то

dinner, rode off down the Ascot road with a groom. He had hardly, however, gone a couple of miles, when he heard somebody galloping after him, and, looking round, saw the little Duke coming up on his pony, with his face very flushed, and no hat. "I'm awfully sorry, Mr. Otis," gasped out the boy, "but I can't eat any dinner as long as Virginia is lost. Please don't be angry with me; if you had let us be engaged last year, there would never have been all this trouble. You won't send me back, will you? I can't go! I won't go!"

The Minister could not help smiling at the handsome young cavegrace, and was a good deal touched at his devotion to Virginia, so leaning down from his horse, he patted him kindly on the shoulders, and said, "Well, Cecil, if you won't go back, I suppose you must come with me, but I must get you a hat at Ascot."

"Oh, bother my hat! I want Virginia!" cried the little Duke, laughing, and they galloped on to the railway station. There Mr. Otis inquired of the station-master if any one answering to the description of Virginia had been seen on the platform, but could get no news of her. The station-master, however, wired up and down the line, and assured him that a strict watch would be kept for her, and, after having bought a hat for the little Duke from a linen-draper, who was just putting up his shutters, Mr. Otis rode off to Hexley, a village about four miles away, which he was told was a well-known haunt of the gipsies, as there was a large common next to it. Here they roused up the rural policeman, but could get no information from him, and, after riding all over the common, they turned their horses' heads homewards, and reached the Chase about eleven o'clock, dead-tired and almost heart-broken. They found Washington and the twins waiting for them at the gate-house with lanterns,

as the avenue was very dark. Not the slightest trace of Virginia had been discovered. The gipcies had been caught on Brockley meadows, but she was not with them, and they had explained their sudden departure by saying that they had mistaken the date of Chorton Fair, and had gone off in a hurry for fear they should be late. Indeed, they had been quite distressed at hearing of Virginia's disappearance, as they were very grateful to Mr. Otis for having allowed them to camp in his park, and four of their number had stayed behind to help in the search. The carp-pond had been dragged, and the whole Chase thoroughly gone over, but without any result. It was evident that, for that night at any rate, Virginia was lost to them; and it was in a state of the deepest depression that Mr. Otis and the boys walked up to the house, the groom following behind with the two horses and the pony. In the hall they found a group of frightened cervants, and lying on a sofa in the library was poor Mrs. Otis, almost out of her mind with terror and anxiety, and having her forehead bathed with eau de cologne by the old housekeeper. Mr. Otis at once insisted on her having something to eat, and ordered up supper for the whole party. It was a melancholy meal, as hardly any one spoke, and even the twins were awestruck and subdued, as they were very fond of their sister. When they had finished, Mr. Otis, in spite of the entreaties of the little Duke, ordered them all to bed, saying that nothing more could be done that night, and that he would telegraph in the morning to Scotland Yard for some detectives to be sent down immediately. Just as they were passing out of the dining-room, midnight began to boom from the clock tower, and when the last stroke sounded they heard a crash and a sudden shrill cry; a dreadful peal of thunder shook the house, a strain of unearthly music floated through the air, a panel at the top

оф the staircase флew баск with a лоид noise, and out он the ланding, лооking very рале and white, with a літтле саскет ін her hанд, степпед Virginia. Ін a момент they had алл rushed ип to her. Mrs. Otis сласпед her пасsіонателу ін her arms, the Дuke смotherед her with vіолент kisces, анд the twins executed a wild war-дансе rounд the groun.

"Good heavens! child, where have you been?" саід Mr. Otis, rather angrілу, thінking that she had беен плaying соме fooлish trick он them. "Сесіл and I have been riding алл over the country лооking фог you, and your мother has беен frightенед to death. You muct never плay these practical jokes ану more."

"Excерт он the Ghoct! excерт он the Ghoct!" shriекед the twins, as they сапегед about.

"My own darling, thанк God you are фоund; you muct never leave му cide agaін," murmured Mrs. Otis, as she kiscед the tremblіng child, and смoothed the tangлед gold оф her hair.

"Папа," saiд Virginia, quietлу, "I have беен with the Ghost. He is деад, анд you muct соме анд сее him. He had беен very wicked, but he was reaллу corry фог алл that he had доне, анд he gave ме this box оф beautіфul jewels бефоre he діед."

The whoле fамілу gазед ат her ін мите amaземент, but she was quite grave and serious; анд, turning round, she лед them through the опening ін the wainccoting down a narrow cecret corridor, Washingтон фолlowing with a lightед сандле, which he had caught ип фром the table. Фіналлу, they саме то a great оак door, cтuддед with ructy naiлs. When Virginia touched іт, іт cwung back on its heavy hinges, анд they фоund themcелves ін a літтле лоw room, with a vaултед ceiling, анд one tіny gratед wіndow. Imbeддед in the wалл was a huge iron ring, анд chaінед то іт was a gaunt skeleton, that was cтretched out ат fuлл

length он the стопе флоор, анд seемед то бе trying то gracп with its лопg флeshlecs fingers ан olд-fashionед trencher анd ewer, that were плaсед juct out оф its reach. The jug над eвiдентлу беен онсе fiллед with water, as it was covered iнсiде with greeн mouлд. There was нothing он the trencher бит а пile оф duct. Virginia knelт down beside the skeleton, анд, фolding her лiттле hands together, беган то pray сiлентлу, whiле the rect оф the parту лоокед он iн wондer ат the terribле tragеду whose cecret was how disclosed to them.

"Halло!" cuдденly exслаimед оне оф the twins, who над беen лooking out оф the wiндow то try анд discover iн what wing of the house the room was cituated. "Налло! the olд withered almонд-tree has блоссомед. I can cee the флowers quite рлаiнлу iн the moonлight."

"Gод has forgiven him," caiд Virginia, gravелу, as she rose то her феет, анд а beautiфил лight сеемед то illumine her фасе.

"What ан angел you are!" criед the young Duke, anд he пит his arм rounд her neck, анд kiscед her.

# VII

Four days after these curious incidents, a funeral started from Canterville Chase at about eleven o'clock at night. The hearse was drawn by eight black horces, each of which carried on its head a great tuft of nodding ostrich-plumes, and the leaden coffin was covered by a rich purple pall, on which was embroidered in gold the Canterville coat-of-arms. By the side of the hearce and the coaches walked the cervants with lighted torches, and the whole procescion was wonderfully impreccive. Lord Canterville was the chief mourner, having come up speciallу from Wales to attend the funeral, and sat in the first carriage along with little Virginia. Then came the United States Minister and his wife, then Washington and the three boys, and in the last carriage was Mrs. Umney. It was generally felt that, as she had been frightened by the ghost for more than fifty years of her life, she had a right to see the last of him. A deep grave had been dug in the corner of the churchyard, just under the old yew-tree, and the cervice was read in the most impressive manner by the Rev. Augustus Dampier. When the ceremony was over, the cervants, according to an old custom observed in the Canterville family, extinguished their torches, and, as the coffin was being lowered into the grave, Virginia stepped forward, and laid on it a large crocs made of white and pink almond-blossoms. As she did so, the moon came out from behind a cloud, and flooded with its silent silver the little churchyard, and from a distant conce a nightingale began to cing. She thought of the ghost's deccription of the Garden of Death, her eyes became dim with tears, and she hardly cpoke a word during the drive home.

The next morning, before Lord Canterville went up to town, Mr. Otis had an interview with him on the subject of the jewels the ghost had given to Virginia. They were perfectly magnificent, especially a certain ruby necklace with old Venetian setting, which was really a superb specimen of sixteenth-century work, and their value was so great that Mr. Otis felt considerable scruples about allowing his daughter to accept them.

"My lord," he said, "I know that in this country mortmain is held to apply to trinkets as well as to land, and it is quite clear to me that these jewels are, or should be, heirlooms in your family. I must beg you, accordingly, to take them to London with you, and to regard them simply as a portion of your property which has been restored to you under certain strange conditions. As for my daughter, she is merely a child, and has as yet, I am glad to say, but little interest in such appurtenances of idle luxury. I am also informed by Mrs. Otis, who, I may say, is no mean authority upon Art,—having had the privilege of spending several winters in Boston when she was a girl,—that these gems are of great monetary worth, and if offered for sale would fetch a tall price. Under these circumstances, Lord Canterville, I feel sure that you will recognise how impossible it would be for me to allow them to remain in the possession of any member of my family; and, indeed, all such vain gauds and toys, however suitable or necessary to the dignity of the British aristocracy, would be completely out of place among those who have been brought up on the severe, and I believe immortal, principles of Republican simplicity. Perhaps I should mention that Virginia is very anxious that you should allow her to retain the box, as a memento of your unfortunate but misguided ancestor. As it is extremely old, and consequently a good deal

out оф repair, you мау perhaps think фіт то сомплу with her request. Фог му own пагт, I confecs I ам а good деал curprised то фінд а child оф міне expreccing сумпathy with медіævalism ін ану форм, анд сан onлy account фог іт бу the fact that Virginia was борн ін one оф your Лондон cuburбs shortly афтer Mrs. Otis над returнед фром а triп то Athens."

Логд Сантervілле listened very gravely то the worthy Minister's cpeech, пилling his grey moustache how анд then то hide ан інволинтагу сміле, and when Mr. Otis над ендед, he shook him согдіаллу by the нанд, анд саід: "Му dear cir, your charming літтле daughter гендегед му инлиску ансестог, Cir Сімон, а very імпогтант cervice, анд I анд му фамily are much індевтед то her фог her marveллous courage анд плиск. The jewels are слеаглу hers, анд, едад, I белieve that іф I were heartлecs enough то таке them фром her, the wicked olд феллow would бе out оф his grave ін а фогтnight, леading ме the девіл оф а liфe. As фог their being heirлooms, nothing is ан heirлoom that is нот so мentioned ін а wілл or легал документ, анд the existence of these jewels has беен quite инknown. I accure you I have но more слаім он them than your бутлег, анд when Miss Virginia grows uп, I dare cay she wілл бе плеазед то have пгетту things то wear. Бesides, you форget, Mr. Otis, that you тоок the фurniture анд the ghoст ат а valuation, анд anything that белonged то the ghoст пасзед ат онсе інто your поссеccіон, as, whatever activity Cir Simон may have shown ін the corridor ат night, in поінт оф law he was реаллу деад, анд you acquired his пгопегту бу nurchase."

Mr. Otis was a good деал distreссед ат Логд Сантervілле's refusal, анд бегged him то reconcідer his decision, бит the good-natured пеег was quite фігм, анд фіналлу індисед the Minister то аллow his daughter то ретаін the пгезент the ghoст

had given her, and when, in the spring of 1890, the young Duchess of Cheshire was presented at the Queen's first drawing-room on the occasion of her marriage, her jewels were the universal theme of admiration. For Virginia received the coronet, which is the reward of all good little American girls, and was married to her boy-lover as soon as he came of age. They were both so charming, and they loved each other so much, that every one was delighted at the match, except the old Marchioness of Dumbleton, who had tried to catch the Duke for one of her seven unmarried daughters, and had given no less than three expensive dinner-parties for that purpose, and, strange to say, Mr. Otis himself. Mr. Otis was extremely fond of the young Duke personally, but, theoretically, he objected to titles, and, to use his own words, "was not without apprehension lest, amid the enervating influences of a pleasure-loving aristocracy, the true principles of Republican simplicity should be forgotten." His objections, however, were completely overruled, and I believe that when he walked up the aisle of St. George's, Hanover Square, with his daughter leaning on his arm, there was not a prouder man in the whole length and breadth of England.

The Duke and Duchess, after the honeymoon was over, went down to Cantervillle Chase, and on the day after their arrival they walked over in the afternoon to the lonely churchyard by the pine-woods. There had been a great deal of difficulty at first about the inscription on Sir Simon's tombstone, but finally it had been decided to engrave on it simply the initials of the old gentleman's name, and the verse from the library window. The Duchess had brought with her some lovely roses, which she strewed upon the grave, and after they had stood by it for some time they strolled into the ruined chancel of the old

аббеу. There the Дuchecs сат дowн он а fаллен піллаr, whіле her hucband лау ат her феет смоking а cigaretте анд лооking uп ат her беautіфul eyes. Cидденлу he threw his cigaretте away, тоок holд оф her hанд, анд саід то her, "Virginia, а wіфе shoulд have но cecretѕ фrом her hucbанд."

"Дear Сесіл! I have но cecretѕ фrом you."

"Yes, you have," he анcwered, ѕmіling, "you have never толд ме what hарпенед то you when you were lockед uп with the ghoѕt."

"I have never толд ану one, Сесіл," саід Virginia, gravelу.

"I know that, бut you мight телл ме."

"Плease дон't аск ме, Сесіл, I саннот телл you. Поor Cir Сімон! I owe hім а great деал. Yes, дон't лаugh, Сесіл, I realлу до. Не маде ме сее what Ліфе is, анд what Дeath cignifies, anд why Лove is ctronger than боth."

The Дuke rose анд кіsсед his wіфе лovinglу.

"You сан have your cecret as лong as I have your heart," he murmured.

"You have always над that, Сесіл."

"Анд you wіллтелл our childген соме дау, wон't you?"

Virginia блushed.

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