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SF PERUSALS

The Canterville Ghost

A Magical Musical Comedy

Peter Quilter

A Samuel French Acting Edition

SAMUEL FRENCH
FOUNDED 1830

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THE CANTERVILLE GHOST

An early version was first produced by Glenn Lee on the London Fringe, January 1995. The production featured Peter Reeves as the Ghost, Josie Walker as Virginia and was directed by Steven Dexter.

The show was revised and a full-scale version was presented by Charles Stephens and Darren Ockert at the Northcott Theatre, Exeter, April 1998 and subsequently went on a national tour with the following cast:

The Ghost	Ron Moody
Mrs Umney	Nicola Sloane
Hiram Otis	Steven Wickham
Lucretia Otis	Corinna Powlesland
Virginia Otis	Sheli Andrew
Junior	Gavin Eaton
Washington	Jamie Golding
Stand-In Ghost	Paul W. Gerrard

Directed by Brian de Salvo
Designed by Will Bowen
Lighting design by Michael Odam
Illusions by Nicholas Einhorn
Sound design by Steven Hawkins
Costume design by Fizz Jones
Musical direction by James Moriarty
Musical staging by Francesca Whitburn
Orchestrations by Alan Gout

CHARACTERS

The Ghost; the dead Simon de Canterville 1525–1585
Hiram Otis; American millionaire
Lucretia Otis; Hiram's wife
Virginia Otis; their daughter, aged 16
***Junior Otis**; their son, aged 13
***Washington Otis**; Junior's twin brother, aged 13
Mrs Umney; the housekeeper of Canterville Chase
The Phantom chorus

The action takes place on a station platform and in the drawing-room, a bedroom, the ghost's chamber and main lawn of Canterville Chase, a large gothic residence in England.

Time—the present

*The roles of Junior and Washington can be made female, by altering the word "boys" to "girls" on the few occasions it comes up. The girl characters would be very tomboyish (offering a complete contrast to Virginia) so there is no reason to alter the basic characterization in any way. If female, the names of the Twins would be Brooklyn and Orlando. The lyrics on page 15 Song No. 4 Terrible Twins — **Junior**: "Will be Junior Mess" **Washington**: "Or Washington State!" should be changed to **Brooklyn**: "Will be Brooklyn the Best" **Orlando**: "And Orlando the Great!"

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT I

No. 1 The Tale of the Canterville Ghost	Chorus
No. 2 Welcome to England — Moving In	Twins, Virginia, Hiram Lucretia, Mrs Umney
No. 3 Otis Cleaning	Twins, Virginia, Hiram
No. 4 Terrible Twins	Twins
No. 5 No Ghost in History	Ghost, Chorus
No. 6 In Diff'rent Ways	Lucretia, Virginia
No. 7 An American Abroad	Hiram, Lucretia, Twins
No. 8 Lessons Must Be Learnt	Mrs Umney
No. 9 Poor Ghost	Virginia
No. 10 Poor Ghost (Reprise)	Virginia

ACT II

No. 11 The Tale of the Canterville Ghost (Reprise)	Chorus
No. 12 A Ray of Light	Ghost, Virginia
No. 13 Going Back to America	Lucretia, Twins, Hiram
No. 14 The Happy Prince	Ghost with Chorus
No. 15 Taking a Stand	Virginia, Lucretia, with Hiram and Twins
No. 16 The Spell	Mrs Umney, Chorus
No. 17 The Tale of The Canterville Ghost (Reprise)	Company

The author wishes to dedicate
the text of this musical
to the following special children

Christopher and Dougal
Sam and Jed
Ruby and Maya
Irene and Marina
Nacho, Eduardo and Mencía

May you grow up to be happy
And live your dreams

Also by Peter Quilter published
by Samuel French Ltd

BoyBand
Respecting Your Piers

ACT I

PRELUDE

When the CURTAIN *rises, the stage is dimly lit and full of mist*

Music

Slowly, ghoulish figures appear out of the darkness. This is the Phantom Chorus, who will make a number of appearances during the show. They are dressed in long, hooded cloaks that obscure their faces from the audience. Beneath their cloaks and hoods, each Phantom wears a wig and is made up with a ghoulish visage. They sing

No. 1 The Tale of the Canterville Ghost

Phantoms Silence now and listen well
For a ghostly tale is due
This is the time for you
To let us cast our spell
There's the chill air of fear
And noises in the breezes
At once your warm heart freezes
At the story you shall hear.

(*Chorus*)
So, sit back, beware!
There's a spirit we can share
So let us be your host
For the tale, for the tale, for the tale
Of the Canterville Ghost!

During the following verse, each Phantom sings an individual line. As they present their line, they remove their hoods to reveal their ghostly faces and wigs

Catch your breath, if you dare
There is magic in the air
There's a whisper in the wind
And a creek upon the stair

There is shrieking in the halls
Blood is dripping down the walls
Beg for mercy from this place
Cry for freedom from the Chase.

For spells reside around here
And mystery is calling
As night is gently falling
The spectre will appear
(He will appear, he will).

(*Chorus*)
So, sit back, beware!
There's a spirit we can share
So let us be your host
For the tale, for the tale, for the tale
Of the Canterville Ghost!

There is a loud roll of thunder

With our final warning cast
From this doorway to the past
There's a ghost from whom you'll hear
In the night, he will appear.

(*Chorus*)
So, sit back, beware!
There's a spirit we can share
So let us be your host
For the tale, for the tale, for the tale, for the tale,
For the tale, for the tale, for the tale,
Of the Canterville… Of the Canterville…
— Ghost!

At the end of the number, the Phantom Chorus strikes a group pose

Black-out

The Phantom Chorus exits

Scene 1

There is the sound of a train pulling away from a station

The Otis family — Hiram, an American millionaire; his wife, Lucretia; their twin sons, Junior and Washington, and their daughter, Virginia — enter. They are carrying a mass of luggage

The Lights come up on Canterville Station platform. A sign nearby reads "Canterville Station"

Hiram Well, kids, this is it. We're here for the whole summer!
Lucretia So, where's the housekeeper? She was supposed to be meeting us. The service here is terrible. In America, this would never happen. What's the housekeeper's name?
Hiram Umney!
Lucretia I'm sorry?
Hiram Umney. Mrs Umney.
Lucretia Really? Isn't that an awful name!?
Hiram Yes — Lucretia!
Washington I'm bored already. It's a dump. And it's freezing.
Junior It's going to rain too. Then we'll be bored *and* wet. Nice call, Pa!
Hiram I would appreciate it if you would at least give this holiday a chance. Canterville Chase is meant to be one of the finest Tudor properties in England.
Washington There isn't even a McDonald's.
Junior (*with heavy sarcasm*) Yeah — nice one, *Dad*.
Virginia I think it's going to be wonderful.
Twins You would!

Mrs Umney enters. Her housekeeping uniform is slightly Tudor in style

Lucretia Look out — something ancient is approaching.
Mrs Umney Mr Otis and family?
Hiram Yep. Are you Umney?
Mrs Umney I am Mrs Umney, the housekeeper. Welcome to the village of Canterville.
Lucretia That's a very unusual outfit you're wearing, Mrs — er — Jubbley…
Mrs Umney The uniform of the housekeeper of Canterville Chase has remained unchanged in over four hundred years.

Lucretia Really? Well, I hope you've had it cleaned! (*She laughs*) I'm Lucretia Otis and this is my husband, Hiram.
Mrs Umney A pleasure to meet you.
Lucretia These are our two sons, Junior and Washington.
Junior Are you as old as you look?
Washington Judging by your face, you look about three hundred.
Mrs Umney Charming.
Lucretia And of course, Virginia. Named after the state where Hiram made his first million.
Mrs Umney How delightful.
Virginia The village looks beautiful, with the fog and everything. It's kinda strange (*to Lucretia*) I've got a feeling of *déjà vu*.
Lucretia So take a tablet! (*To Mrs Umney*) Virginia can be a little strange. You'll get used to that. Just ignore her.
Hiram Good, well now you're here and we've all been introduced, how about getting us out of this cold, damp weather and snuggled up in front of a nice warm fire? Huh?

The Otis family pick up their cases. Mrs Umney stops them

Mrs Umney One moment, if you please. I must give you our traditional song of welcome.
Junior She's gonna sing!?
Mrs Umney The custom has remained unchanged in over four hundred years. If you please … ? (*She sings*)

No. 2 Welcome to England — Moving In

Welcome to England
To gardens, grass and trees
To fields of wheat and flowers
All blowing in the breeze
Welcome to pastures new
To manners mild and calm
Polite in tone and civilized
Welcome to your home.

It begins to rain

The Otis family take out umbrellas, put them up and stand amidst the downpour looking thoroughly wet and miserable

Welcome to England
To blue and sunny skies
To land of hills and valleys
And rivers of surprise
Welcome to customs new
To tempers tame and cool
Happy ways to charm your days
Welcome to you all.

The music continues to underscore

Mrs Umney marches past. The Otis family pick up their cases and follow her off stage

There is a roll of thunder and a flash of lightning

Black-out

The Lights rise on the drawing-room of Canterville Chase

This is a typical style gothic residence in England. It consists of wood panelling and gothic arches. It has cobwebs, antique electrical lamps, a grandfather clock, a mantelpiece with various ornaments, shelves of books and an umbrella stand. There is a large portrait of the late Simon de Canterville. There is a main door and a door leading to the bedrooms. A window, US, *looks out on to the main lawn. It is framed by curtains*

Mrs Umney enters through the main door. The Otis family follow carrying the cases. They look around the room with awe

I hope you will enjoy your stay
Welcome to your home

Lucretia (*speaking*) Oh, Hiram! This house is gorgeous! It's all so — English!

(*Singing*) I've made up my mind
I'm so glad to be here
I've seen enough
I'm happy now
'Cos this place is such a wow!
I've made up my mind
Who cares for sunshine?
Had enough

United States
Just give me cake on china plates
You have to admit that this house here is great
So it leaves only one thing for me to demonstrate!

(*Chorus*)
We're moving in
We're now at home
We're living up, we're so refined,
It's all so old but I don't mind
We took a plane to a land in the sea
You're gonna love it, you can take it from me
Moving in, moving up, being English, being rich,
Such a thrill,
Moving in,
To Canterville.

Hiram
Lucretia
Virginia
We've made up our minds
We're so glad to be here
We've had enough
Of getting bored
Stuck in a land that's now abroad
We've made up our minds.

Twins There's plenty to break here!
Hiram
Lucretia Making home is now our plan.
Twins And destroying all we can!
All We've each got a room plus a dozen to spare —
We'll be living like kings, no worry or care!

Moving in, moving up
Being English, being rich
Taking stock, turning fate
Really rocking, going great.

Lucretia
We're moving in
We're now at home
We're living up, we're so refined,
It's all so old but I don't mind.

All (*except Lucretia*)
Moving in, moving up,
Being English, being rich
Taking stock, turning fate
Really rocking, going great.

All We took a plane to a land in the sea
We're gonna love it, you can take it from me.

Moving in, moving up
Being English, being rich
Taking stock, turning fate
Really rocking, going great.

Twins
Moving in…
Such a thrill…

All (*except the Twins*)
Moving in, moving up
Being English, being rich
Taking stock, turning fate
Really rocking, going great

All Such a thrill.
Moving in…
To Canterville ——

Mrs Umney Welcome to England ——
All — to Canterville.

During the audience applause, a red spotlight comes up in the corner of the room creating the illusion of a bloodstain

Mrs Umney I bid you welcome to Canterville Chase.
Junior I hate the curtains.
Washington They look like someone has just thrown up all over them.
Mrs Umney They're oriental.
Hiram What's this part of the house called, Mrs Umney?
Mrs Umney The drawing-room. You may prefer to call it the sitting-room or the (*pronouncing it as "lange"*) lounge.
Hiram "Lange"?
Mrs Umney That is correct.

Hiram notices a number of ornaments on the mantelpiece

Hiram Darling, what about these ornaments?
Lucretia Oh, they're very tasteful, very refined.
Hiram I agree with you — we'll get rid of them.

The both laugh

Lucretia (*to Mrs Umney*) Are they African?

Mrs Umney French, madam.
Lucretia Yes, I thought so.
Junior (*looking at the portrait*) Who's the idiot in the picture?
Mrs Umney (*with mystery*) That's — that's … Simon de Canterville …
Junior Did he always dress like that or was he doing it for a bet?
Mrs Umney No, that is how he always dressed, in the mid-sixteenth century when he was a resident of this house. And, in many ways, he still is …

Virginia examines the stain in the corner of the room

Virginia There's a very strange mark here.
Hiram What?
Virginia Look. Here in the corner of the room. A sort of red stain.
Hiram She's right. Look! A stain! All the money I paid for this place and I get a lumping great red stain!
Lucretia It's funny, isn't it, dear. You made your fortune from stain removers and household cleaners, and now you've spent most of it on renting a house that really needs them. I think it's adorable the way the world goes round in circles.
Hiram Unbelievable!
Lucretia Why on earth haven't you cleaned it up, Mrs Bumbley?
Mrs Umney That is the Canterville stain, Mrs Otis. It has been there for many centuries.
Lucretia Really? Well, don't you think it's time it was removed?
Mrs Umney That stain can never be cleaned, I am afraid. For it is the blood of Lady Eleanor de Canterville. The wife of Sir Simon.
Hiram Wait a minute, wait a minute — are you telling me that I have to keep this stain? That I have to put up with a great big pool of blood in my "lange"?
Mrs Umney If I may explain, that — is the Canterville stain. It has been a feature of this house for very many centuries. For it is on this very spot that Lady Eleanor drew her last breath. She was murdered by her husband, Sir Simon de Canterville, whose portrait now looks down on his dreadful crime. The bloodstain cannot be removed, we have tried everything.
Hiram But not — this! (*He instantly produces a bottle from his pocket and presents it with a proud smile*) This is "Otis's Champion Stain Remover". A fine product that will clear that stain in a matter of seconds — I should know, I am "Otis Cleansing"— I own the company.
Mrs Umney How very American …
Hiram Let me give you a free demonstration. (*He takes a rag from his pocket; he sings*)

No. 3 Otis Cleansing

Otis Cleansing
For a happy ending
Otis Cleansing
We will take the strain
Stains are pending
For our bleach and no pretending
Otis Cleansing
Life will never be the same.

During the following, the Twins proceed to remove the stain with the rag and some of the ointment. The red spotlight gradually fades

There's no need to be hysterical
We have the very chemical
No spill will be resurgent
With the use of my detergent
And you'll praise the name
That cleaned the stain
That had been so offending.
Otis Cleansing,
That's my name!

(*Speaking*) Tell her, kids.

Twins
Virginia

Otis Cleansing
For a happy ending, (ending, ending, ending)
Otis Cleansing
We will take the strain, (take the strain)
Stains are pending
For our bleach and no pretending
Otis Cleansing
Life will never be the same.

Twins Otis Cleansing…
Hiram Life is so much simpler using —
Twins Otis Cleansing…
Hiram Ask about our guarantee, there's —
All Always a happy ending…
Hiram Have a bottle as a souvenir!

On the final note, Hiram throws the stain remover to a dumbfounded Mrs Umney. The family applaud

(*Speaking*) What did I tell you!? I knew this stuff would do it.

Mrs Umney looks horrified

Virginia What's the matter, Mrs Umney? Aren't you glad the stain's gone?
Mrs Umney Indeed I am not. I fear we may all have cause to regret this act of desecration.

There is a rumble of thunder and a flash of lightning

Lucretia What a terrible climate you have here. I suppose England is so over-populated, you don't have enough decent weather to go round.

There is more thunder and lightning. The flash on this occasion lights the face of Sir Simon in the portrait. A loud evil cackle is heard. Mrs Umney screams and faints on to the floor. Hiram is shocked

Hiram Oh no! Quickly someone, help!

Junior rushes over to Mrs Umney and takes the bottle from her hand and brings it to Hiram

Is it OK? She nearly broke the unique adjustable lid. You can't get these replaced over here.
Lucretia What did she go and do that for?
Virginia (*going over to help*) I think she fainted.
Hiram What do we do?
Lucretia Deduct it from her wages — then she won't do it again.

There is more thunder and lightning, this time very loud and bright

The room goes into a sudden Black-out

Now what!?
Junior It's OK — I got a flashlight. (*He gets a torch from one of his bags*)
Lucretia Well, hurry up with it, I can't see a thing. Give it to me.

Lucretia switches on the torch and moves around the room with it. She moves towards Mrs Umney

Now, where is the light switch?

She suddenly lights the face of Mrs Umney, standing directly in front of her, and lets out a scream

Mrs Umney It's only me, Mrs Otis. So sorry to have frightened you.
Lucretia What the heck is going on here, Mrs Bubbley?

Mrs Umney He's up to his tricks again. I should be used to it by now, I know, but he still manages to frighten me — even after all these years.
Lucretia Who?
Mrs Umney The Ghost, madam.
Lucretia Ghost! What Ghost?
Mrs Umney Sir Simon de Canterville.
Lucretia The guy that murdered his wife?
Mrs Umney Yes. Or as he is better known in these parts — The Canterville Ghost.
Lucretia Are you drunk?
Mrs Umney No, madam. I am quite sober and quite serious.

There is thunder and lightning. During the flashes, Lucretia's night case mysteriously works its way across and off the stage. It is pulled by a very thin piece of wire, unseen by the audience

The Lights suddenly come back on again and the stain has re-appeared

Virginia (*noticing the stain*) Well, that's strange.
Washington The stain! Look!
Junior The blood! It's come back!
Twins (*with glee*) Oh, gross!
Hiram Maniac ghosts! Recurring stains! What is all this? — I don't think you're giving us the whole picture!
Mrs Umney Perhaps it is best that I fully explain. Canterville Chase has for very many centuries been haunted by a most terrifying ghost. That of the extremely dead Sir Simon de Canterville. After murdering his wife, he disappeared in very mysterious circumstances. His body has never been discovered, but his guilty spirit still haunts the Chase. I have seen things with my own eyes that would make any Christian's hair stand on end, and many a night have not closed my eyes in sleep for the awful things that are done here. This is why we have had such difficulty in finding occupants. I believe the agents only turned to advertising in America out of desperation.
Lucretia So the place really is haunted?
Mrs Umney Oh, yes, madam.
Lucretia (*suddenly elated*) How cute! Our own little English ghost! How adorable! I must write to Agnes in Baltimore, she's already sick with jealousy, this should make her completely keel over!
Virginia So is that why you work here all on your own?
Mrs Umney Yes. Other staff tend not to stay for very long — upset by the mysterious noises and strange apparitions — but the Umneys have a long tradition in this house, going back many proud generations. So — I always put on a brave face myself.

Hiram I wondered what that expression was … Listen, Umney, we don't tend to have ghosts in the States, and even if we did, we wouldn't be afraid of them; we'd just put them into a zoo or a Broadway show.
Lucretia Or wait for them to run for governor.
Hiram So, don't you worry. Nothing yet has ever managed to frighten the Otis family! OK?
Mrs Umney Very well. I did feel it was my duty to warn you — but if you're quite sure …?
Virginia Do you think the Ghost will appear at some point?
Washington Of course he will, Virginia — what's the point of being a ghost and *not* appearing?
Junior Yeah — and when he does, Sis, we'll teach him a thing or two.
Virginia What do you mean?
Washington He needs to be shown who's in charge.
Junior Yeah — he'll be under our control. Right, Pa?
Hiram Whatever — you guys just enjoy yourselves.

Hiram begins to scrub away at the stain again, and the red spotlight gradually fades as he cleans

Mrs Umney Excuse me, but I warn you that the Canterville Ghost will not take at all kindly to any adverse action on your part. You would be mistaken to put him to the test.
Junior We're not frightened of some dusty old corpse.
Washington Yeah — you have no idea.
Junior We're your worst nightmare.
Lucretia Well, folks, I'm going to bed. All this excitement is tiring me out. Hiram? Are you coming?
Hiram (*having removed the stain*) Sure, honey.
Lucretia (*looking around*) Where's my night case? It's disappeared.
Mrs Umney I expect, madam, that the Canterville Ghost has taken it.
Lucretia The Ghost has taken my night case? Why? Is he planning to stalk the corridors wearing my nightie and a face-pack?
Mrs Umney The spirits are very mysterious, madam.
Lucretia Then I suggest you stop drinking them! Where's our bedroom?
Mrs Umney Second door on the left.

Hiram and Lucretia exit to the bedroom with a couple of cases

Miss Virginia, you might like to take the last room on the right — it's very comfortable.
Virginia Thanks.

Virginia exits, taking a case with her and pausing to stare at the portrait of Simon de Canterville as she goes

Mrs Umney The twin room is first on the right.
Junior We're not tired yet.
Mrs Umney Then I shall see you at breakfast.

Mrs Umney turns to go. The twins pull out water pistols and aim them at her back. She turns in time to catch them, grabbing an umbrella and pointing it threateningly. They back down

Mrs Umney exits, blowing the end of the umbrella like a fired pistol

Junior Get ya next time.
Washington Yeah.
Junior This is gonna be great. A real live ghost to battle.
Washington You mean — a real dead ghost!
Junior Yeah! It'll be fantastic! The question is how to do the job. Do we drench him, pelt him, hit him, trip him, dip him, or — split him!
Twins Yeah!

The Twins mime splitting the ghost in two and all his guts spilling out

Washington Hey! Why don't we do the lot?
Junior You betcha! (*Yelling*) Hey, dead guy! You're in for a real shock!
Washington You got the Otis Twins living here now!
Junior And that means ——
Twins Big — trouble! (*They sing*)

* *Please see character note on page iv*

No. 4 Terrible Twins

We'll show you
You will know
We're the best
We're the Twins
You will go
All pale and thin
Beating your chest
Shaking your head
So distressed.

Get real 'cos
You'll be scared
Off you'll fly
Through the door
You won't dare
To get us back

And it's true
You won't believe the things we'll do…

(*Chorus*)
You've never seen anything
Had a look at anything
Quite so fright'ning as the Terrible Twins!
You'll plainly be paralysed
Damaged and electrified
You will be petrified
By Terrible Twins!

We'll have you
On your knees
We're the champs
We're the Twins
You will freeze
Right on the spot
Having no chance
Blocking your ears
And wetting your pants.

Get real 'cos
You'll be fried
Off you'll run
Down the hall
You'll have died
A hundred times
When we're through
You won't believe what lives with you …

(*Chorus*)
You've never seen anything
Had a look at anything
Quite so fright'ning as the Terrible Twins!
You'll plainly be paralysed
Damaged and electrified
You will be petrified
By Terrible Twins!

Let us begin to tell you
'Cos it will blow your mind
The things we've done all over the years
Are so desperately unkind
The Twins will be known for their rage and hate

And the damage we cause will be terribly great
The name they will give to the hell we create

Junior Washington Twins *Will be Junior Mess [Will be Brooklyn the Best]
*Or Washington State![And Orlando the Great]
So pay close attention to our little song
We'll never get to heaven 'cos we've always gone wrong.

The music continues — "dance break". During this, Junior and Washington proceed to smash a number of ornaments and to inflict other damage on the drawing-room. Alternatively, they can do a dance routine

(*Chorus*)
You've never seen anything
Had a look at anything
Quite so fright'ning as the Terrible Twins!
You'll plainly be paralysed
Damaged and electrified
You will be petrified
Shocked and pulverized
By Terrible…Terrible…
Terrible…Terrible…
Twins… Twins.

Now that you've heard about our terrible sins
You will quake in your boots at the Terrible Twins!

Black-out

Scene 2

Hiram's and Lucretia's bedroom

There is a door, L. *There is a four-poster bed,* C, *and a bedside table with a small bottle on it. There is a light cord or switch above the bed*

The Lights come up on Lucretia as she sits up in their four-poster bed. She holds an American magazine that obscures her face. Her face is heavily caked in the luminous green gunge that is her face pack

Hiram enters from the bathroom, wearing a vulgar pair of pyjamas

Hiram (*looking at Lucretia*) I see you found your night case, then.
Lucretia It was in the bathroom all the time — how did you know? (*She lays down the magazine, revealing her face pack*)
Hiram Just a lucky guess …!
Lucretia I hope this place manages to keep the kids occupied.

Hiram Maybe they'll love it. We could end up buying the place.
Lucretia Yes. Well, I mean, while we're here we should really buy as much of England as we can.
Hiram It'll be good for Virginia too. A change of scene. A chance to really find herself.
Lucretia Find herself!? You'd need a road map and Indiana Jones!
Hiram Budge over. (*He gets into bed*) At last — I could sleep for a week. Good-night, Lucretia.
Lucretia Whatever.

They switch out the lights and settle down to sleep

After a few moments, we hear a curious noise coming from outside the door. It is the clank of metal and rattling chains accompanied by long, low moans and stomach-churning elongated burps — getting gradually nearer

Hiram? Hiram!

Hiram wakes and puts the light on

What's that noise?
Hiram I don't know, it —it sounds like it might be the "Ghost".
Lucretia (*sitting bolt upright*) The Ghost? Coming here? Into our bedroom? For heck's sake, turn the light out — I haven't even done my hair!

Hiram turns the lights out. There are more chain-rattling and moaning noises

A ghoulish green light pierces through the frame of the bedroom door. Slowly, the door creaks open. Swirling mist begins to fill the room. There are eerie music and rolls of thunder and distant blood-curdling screams

The Ghost enters into the room through the mist. He is dressed in a soiled antique gown and other ragged garments, covered with cobwebs and skeletons. From his wrists and ankles hang heavy manacles and rusty chains

An eerie light fills the room

Lucretia buries herself behind Hiram, so the Ghost cannot see her face

The Ghost lets out a final long moan, rolls his eyes and gnashes his teeth. He then throws open his gown and a pile of mock human guts spring out and hang down to the floor

A pause

Suddenly, Hiram's face lights up and he bursts into applause

Hiram (*laughing hysterically*) Bravo! Bravo! So, you're the dead guy, right? Well, you sure got some guts!

Hiram and Lucretia laugh joyously at this comment. The Ghost is completely stunned by this reaction

Nice to meet you at last.

Ghost (*in absolute shock*) Thou darest to laugh at *me*! (*Refusing to accept that they are not completely terrified of him, he launches into a second wave of revolting ghoulishness, waving his guts at them, throwing about wild hand gestures and emitting every revolting noise in the book*)

There is no reaction from Hiram apart from a wide grin

A moment's pause

The somewhat deflated Ghost makes a final weak attempt

Boogie, boogie, boogie.

Hiram I'm sorry, I don't speak French. Anyway, I'm Hiram Otis, the new tenant of Canterville Chase. And this is my wife, Lucretia.

Seizing on a second chance, the Ghost lurches round to the other side of the bed with a loud cackle. As he is about to give Lucretia his worst, she turns sharply to look at him, revealing her green face in all its glory. The Ghost reels backwards in absolute horror

Lucretia Hi, there!

Hiram switches on the bedroom lights

Hiram That was just great. Hey, what an entrance!

Lucretia Oh!

Hiram You just kill me!

Lucretia You!

Hiram But listen, I know it's the first time we met and all, but I really need to talk to you about doing this kind of thing once we've gone to bed. I mean, we're on holiday here, right? We need to sleep and relax, right? So I've gotta insist you do something about those rattling chains.

Ghost My what?

Hiram The chains. Too loud.

Lucretia They're very rusty.

Hiram It's OK, though, we can sort this out in no time. With — this! (*He grabs a small bottle from the bedside table*) This is "Otis's Rising Sun Lubricator". Just a few squirts on that rusty old metal of yours and those chains will move around smoothly and silently. So, there you go. (*He gives the bottle to the Ghost*) Five dollars a bottle.

Ghost (*bemused*) I don't have dollars. I've got groats.

Hiram Are they painful? Anyway, look — we'll sort it out some other time. So, no more rattling chains, huh? And everybody's happy!

Lucretia smiles at the Ghost, who grimaces back

Lucretia OK? Well, Mr — Mr Corpse, we're going back to sleep now. Maybe next time we'll bring you some medication for your — for your groats. Nightie-night.

Hiram Nightie-night.

They settle back into the bed and go to sleep. The Ghost stands there, with bottle of lubricant, in total dismay. Finally, he becomes furious

Ghost I am the Canterville Ghost! I have no need of lubricant! (*He tosses the bottle to the floor and re-musters his strength, letting out an almighty moan*)

There is thunder and lightning, causing the lights in the room to flicker

The Ghost reaches his peak

Junior and Washington burst through the door wearing pyjamas designed with convict motifs and carrying pillows. They batter the Ghost violently with the pillows

The Ghost flees from the bedroom in a panic

The Twins, victorious, jump about with sheer joy. Hiram and Lucretia sit up in bed and applaud, laughing hysterically

The Lights fade to Black-out

The sound of the family's laughter echoes loudly and continually through the scene change

SCENE 3

The Ghost's chamber

It is like an old actor-manager's dressing-room, filled with costumes, props and chests. There is battered sixteenth-century throne. All are covered with thick dust and cobwebs. There are several busts and skulls. There is a stained-glass window in the centre of the back wall, which has ancient writing upon it. There is a mirror

The Lights come up

No. 5 No Ghost in History

The Ghost enters furiously. He stumbles into the room and tears off the layers of his costume, throwing them angrily aside. He catches his face in the mirror and suddenly drops from fury to dejection. He slumps into the throne

Ghost (*singing*) No ghost in history has ever been so insulted!
No ghost in history has ever been so assaulted!
No ghost has ever been offered lubricant before!
And been attacked by little brats
With vicious acts of war
I have never known such feelings of dejection
To stand there and be battered
Leads a ghost to introspection
In my brilliant career
And my four hundredth year
I've never failed to rule
As Britain's greatest stately ghoul…

No ghost in history
Has ever been as fine as me
Cower at the things I do
Speak only when you're spooken to!
No ghost in history
Has ever been as fine as me
Frightening my many guests
And causing tremors in their chests.

I was the one who made the butler faint
As I split apart my stomach with inordinate restraint
And drove four housemaids to hysteric screams
When appearing garrotted as they dusted beams.

I was the one who on Christmas Eves
Flew across the lawn to perform "Greensleeves"
Using my bones as a xylophone
And a gangrened leg as a slide trombone.

No ghost in history
Has ever been as fine as me
Cower at the things I do
Speak only when you're spooken to!
No ghost in history
Has ever been as fine as me
Blasting all the world with fear
And then I simply disappear.

But though my actions have raised violent storms and thunder
And put folk in fear of what lies six foot under
All the world means nothing
If I find myself to be
No longer driving fear and dread
Into those who witness me
When a ghoul can't rule
From his tomb with a view
It's a truly grave situation
What's a ghost to do?

(*Speaking with renewed defiance*) Do? — I'll tell you what I'll do! Ha! Unfearing Americans! I'll show them! I'll have them gibbering uncontrollably before the week is out! For am I not Sir Simon de Canterville — the finest spook that ever — died! My hauntings are triumphant! All my personas, my characters, the very stuff of graveyard legend!

During the following, as he mentions each of his famous personas, a member of the Phantom Chorus appears in the character's guise mentioned. Each appearance is surprising, they emerge from trunks, doorways, through portraits, from beneath flooring, from behind curtains

Music continues to underscore

(*Speaking*) There was Dreadful Desmond, the Deadly Dancer;
Ghastly Gareth, the Garrotted Gallivant;
Calamity Carol, the Cannibalistic Cook;

Malicious Martin, the Murdered Musician;
Petrifying Peter, the Pulverizing Peasant;
Beelzebub Brenda, the Bludgeoning Barmaid;
Firesome Freddie, the Fearsome Fop;
Hatchet Harriet, the Horrifying Harlot;
Tortured Titania, the Terrifying Tart
And of course —
Wretched Robert, the Revenging Rector!

All of the Phantoms are now on stage, dressed as each of Sir Simon's past triumphs. They join in the rest of the song with the Ghost; singing

All No ghost in history
Has ever been as fine as me
Cower at the things I do
Speak only when you're spooken to!
No ghost in history
Has ever been as fine as me
Gnashing teeth and dagger claws
And then I pause for my applause

In the verses that follow, lines are divided amongst characters within the Phantom Chorus

Wretched Robert I was the one who made the rector holler
When grinning at his face in a clerical collar

Calamity Carol And caused a duchess to spill her tea
And then fall into her porridge at the sight of me

Dreadful Desmond I am the one who at every chance
Has led each guest through a merry dance

Beelzebub Brenda For a ghost who's great won't accept defeat

Ghastley Gareth Take any chance for a fast retreat!

All No ghost in history
Has ever been as fine as me
Cower at the things I do
Speak only when you're spooken to!
No ghost in history
Has ever been as fine as me ——

Ghost I'll have them fearing for their souls
As I employ my many roles
And when I've crushed those guttersnipes
I'll tear apart their stars and stripes!

All I will show them
With all my heart
That no ghost in history
Has been...so...smart...!

They form a final triumphant pose

Thunder and lightning

Black-out

Scene 4

The drawing-room. The next morning

The drawing-room is set for breakfast. There are a table and some chairs. There is a chair set in a corner of the room for Virginia. There is a tea-trolley with bowls, jugs of water, teacups, a tureen of porridge, a pot of tea and a milk jug

As the Lights come up, Virginia is looking around the room

Mrs Umney enters

Virginia Good-morning, Mrs Umney.
Mrs Umney Good-morning, Miss Virginia. What may I fetch you for breakfast. Toast? Or a little porridge?
Virginia I don't know... What do you suggest?
Mrs Umney I myself always have porridge. It warms you through and gets your bowels moving. Great Britain stands or falls on porridge.
Virginia Then I guess I better have that. But, I'll wait for the others.
Mrs Umney Very good. I think we might be lucky and have some sun later on.
Virginia That would be great — I'd like to do some painting.
Mrs Umney I trust you have no objection to eating in the drawing-room. The breakfast room is still gorged with blood from a haunting episode several years ago. We just don't seem to be able to scrape it all off.

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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