

# LITTLE STAR HR. SEC. SCHOOL

## English

### Class 12

## Novel- The Canterville Ghost -

### Ch 2&3

### OSCAR WILDE



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# Chapter 2

The blood reappeared the next day. Washington said that there must be a ghost in the house.

On the third day, Otis family went to enjoy the wonderful evening of July.



They returned after enjoying. At eleven o'clock the family had gone to bed.

*The Otis family on realising that there was a ghost in the house decided to go for a drive.*

*What would you do if you found out that there was a ghost in your house?*

# First Encounter With The Ghost

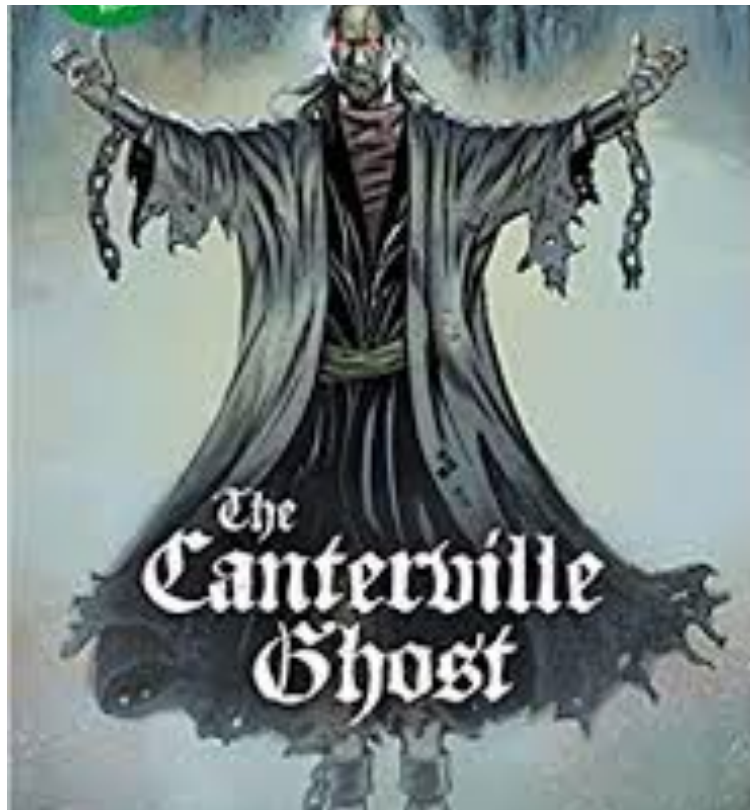


Mr. Otis was sleeping but at 1:00 a.m he was awakened by a strange noise. It was the clank of a metal. The sound was coming closer step by step.

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He took up a bottle of a lubricator and came out of the room.





Mr. Otis saw frightening old man in front of him.  
Heavy chain hung from his wrists & ankles.  
The Ghost moved towards the Mr. Otis.  
The ghost lived in the house for nearly 300 years.







Mr. Otis offered the ghost lubricator & advised him to use it on his chains.  
Seeing that he had failed to frighten Mr. Otis, the ghost became very angry.  
Threw the bottle angrily and fled away from there.

Was Mr. Otis afraid of the ghost?  
What does this tell you about Mr. Otis?





As the ghost reached the top of the stairs, a pillow struck his head, this was done by the naughty twins from their room , then the ghost disappeared.

How do you think the ghost must have felt?

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The Ghost ran to his secret room.  
Angry & insulted.  
He thought about his past achievements.  
He had frightened many people.  
Some even died.



**What do you think of Mr. Otis's reaction when he saw the ghost?**



# Chapter 3

Next Morning - Mr. Otis scolds the twins for throwing pillows at the ghost. Mr. Otis adds that the ghost should not make so much noise with his chains.

Rest of the week, the ghost didn't disturb them.





# The Colours of the Bloodstain

Just renewed the stain which was continuously removed by Washington.

Color of stain - changing continuously.

Dull red - vermillion rich purple, to green etc.

This amused the family members except **Virginia**.

Unhappy on the day on which the stain changed to emerald green.

The reason for Virginia's unhappiness at the sight of the emerald green blood stain appears in the later chapters.



# 2nd Appearance of the Ghost

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The ghost had the suit of armour. He wore it in the reign of Queen Elizabeth 1 & she had admired it.

On Sunday night he decided to wear it but it was very heavy



- The Canterville Ghost could not stand & fell heavily on the floor.
- The sound brought the entire family to the hall.
- The ghost was sitting in chair nursing his wounds.
- The Twins attacked the ghost with paper pellets.
- Mr. Otis put out his revolver - asked the ghost to raise up his hands.**
- With a cry of rage, the ghost swept through them like a mist extinguishing the candle.





On the Stairs, the ghost gave a demoniac  
laughter

Mrs Otis gave him a bottle of tincture

Said it was good for indigestion

The Ghost got angry

Wanted to turn to a large dog

**Hears the twins and disappears.**

Stays in his room

Comes out only renew the blood stain

Is Mrs. Otis also rational like her husband?

Do you think the ghost was scared of the twins?



# The Ghost's Plan to take Revenge

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Friday the 17<sup>th</sup> August - next appearance. Violent storm & wind.

Dressed himself with a white sheet and a hat with red feather and took a rusty dagger in his hand.

**The Canterville ghost liked to dress up and thought of himself as an actor.**



# Plan of action

1. First the ghost wanted to avenge himself on Washington who was cleaning the blood stain everyday.

The ghost would go to Washington's room gibber in his ears and stab himself three times.





# Plan of action

2. Then his next target were Mr. & Mrs. Otis.

He would put his cold hand on Mrs. Otis's forehead and hiss terrible secrets in Mr. Otis's ears.

**Why did he hate Mr. and Mrs. Otis?**



# Plan of action

3. After this he wanted to frighten Virginia only slightly because she had never insulted him.



# Plan of action

4. The Ghost was most angry with the twins, who had insulted him very much.

He wanted to sit on their chest and stand between them like an icy cold corpse





# Midnight - Third Appearance of the Ghost

Ghost walks around muttering 16 Century curses.

Enters Washington's room at 12:15 am

Sees another Ghost.

Scared Runs Away.

Decides to meet the ghost the next day.

Realises that it is a fake ghost



In great anger he swore that when the cock crowed twice, the deeds of blood will be done.

The cock crowed once.

The ghost happily waited the cock to crow again.

To his distress it didn't happen.

To the ghost it was an indication that this was an unsuccessful oath.

Cursing the cock he returned to a comfortable coffin and remained there till evening.



# ASSESSMENT

Now look at the questions and try to answer as many as you can. (Page 21 onwards are textbook questions and the same as those in the back of the lesson)

You can check your answers in the following pages.

[Or you can go straight to the online quiz. Click Here.](#)



## **Summative Assessment (Ch 1-4) Question will be in the back of the book or in the page 48 before the start of Chapter 5**

1. The ghost's ghoulish and creepy behaviour towards the Otis family starts with the usual enthusiasm, but it does not last? Trace the behaviour and strategies of the ghost from the beginning to the point where he retires to plan his revenge on the 17th August.
2. Describe in detail the careful plan that the ghost makes to frighten the individual members of the Otis family. Provide a detailed description of the anti climax. What does the ghost come across and how does he act?
3. What aspects of the ghost's character are revealed when the ghost's attempts to scare the Otis family fails? Describe his states of mind in detail, up to the point when he retires, only to plan revenge against the young Duke of Cheshire?
4. The ghost is very conscious of his appearance and makeup/ Can you describe in detail the various costumes he had donned for his appearance on different occasions in the past as well as to scare the Otis family?
5. Give detailed character sketch of Mr. Hiram Otis. As you do so, point out what predominant quality stands out in his character?
6. Describe each member of the Otis family and explain at least one common characteristics present in all of them, citing instances as you do so.

## **Summative Assessment (Ch 1-4) Question will be in the back of the book or in the pages before the start of Chapter 5**

Ans1. The ghost initially was very confident in his ability to scare the inhabitants of the Canterville Chase and he had been successful in doing that for 300 years. When the Otis family moved into the house, the ghost's ghoulish and creepy behaviour starts with usual enthusiasm. It begins with the bloodstains on the library floor. The bloodstains didn't disturb or scare the Otis family instead Washington removed it with a stain remover. These happened three times and then the ghost appeared in chains to menace Mr. Otis. However, Mr. Otis was not disturbed by the sight of the ghost and gave him a lubricator to oil his chains. This filled the ghost with indignation and he violently threw the bottle upon the floor and fled. But just as he reached the staircase the twins threw a pillow and the ghost vanished. After this incident, he decided to take revenge on the Otis family. For his second appearance, the Canterville Ghost tried to put on an old suit of armour but was unable to bear its weight and knocked it over. When the family came, he was seen sitting on a high-backed chair nursing his wounds. When the Twins saw him, they shot at him with pea shooters and Mr Otis held up his revolver and told the ghost to raise his hands. The ghost blew out Washington's candle and quickly vanished. He recovered only when he reached the top of the staircase. In an attempt to fulfil his ghostly duty, he gave his celebrated demoniac laughter. This made Mrs. Otis offer him medicine as she thought that he had indigestion. The ghost, filled with fury, was about to turn himself into a black dog but hesitated as he heard footsteps and thought that it might be the twins. He retired to his room and entirely broke down and became extremely upset and angry. He became extremely ill for a few days and hardly stirred out of his room at all. He, then planned to take revenge on the Otis family on 17th August. These incidents show that the ghost was not as confident as he was in the beginning and he seemed somewhat frightened by the Twins. All of his tricks were always met with practical solutions such as the stain remover, oil, tincture and the mischief of the twins. These filled the ghost with dejection and frustration. However, the Canterville Ghost was egoist and revengeful and decided to take revenge on the Otis family on 17th August.

Ans 2. The ghost decided to attempt to frighten the United States Minister and his family on Friday, 17th August. He planned that he would gibber at the foot of Washington's bed and stab himself three times in the throat to the sound of low music. Then he would go to Mr. and Mrs. Otis's room, place a clammy hand on the wife and hissed into her husband's ears the terrible secrets of the charnel-house. He thought that a few groans from the wardrobe would be sufficient for Miss Virginia or he might grapple at the counterpane with palsy twitching fingers. As for the Twins, he was determined to teach them a lesson by sitting on their chest and producing the sensation of nightmare. Then, he would stand between their bed in the form of icy-cold corpse.

The ghost dressed himself with a white sheet and a hat with red feather. He took a rusty dagger in his hand and walked around muttering 16 century curses and at 12:15 am entered Washington's room and as he turned to the corner, he fell back and hid his face with his long bony hand. He saw a horrible ghost standing in front of him. Having never seen a ghost before, he ran back to his room. The next day, he wanted to meet the ghost but when he went to the corner, he realised that it was a fake ghost. Filled with anger, at being tricked, foiled and outwitted by the twins, he swore that he would murder someone by the time the cock crowed twice. However, his plan was foiled again as the cock failed to crow twice that day.



Ans 3. The Otis family, being a practical family, were not frightened by the supernatural. They viewed everything in black and white. The ghost's egotist nature is revealed when he proudly recalls his past experiences and how he frightened the residents of the house. He was vengeful and bore grudges against people. The ghost was also very particular about his ghostly appearances and spend hours planning his role, costumes putting on makeup. The ghost was very comfortable in his skin as a ghost until the Otis family came along. The indifferent and rational attitude of the Otis family made the ghost bear grudges against them. The ghost's vengeful character is revealed here as he began to elaborately plan his ghostly appearances and how he would scare each member of the Otis family. The ghost planned several times to teach the Otis family a lesson and to frighten them. But all his plans were foiled. The Otis family were not frightened by the supernatural. The character of the ghost gradually changes after his encounter with the Otis family. The ghost becomes defensive and scared. Sometimes, he would not leave his room for several days because he was depressed and scared of the Twins. His feelings were wounded as the twins always played pranks on him and the rest of the family were not bothered by his ghostly appearances. By the time the Duke of Cheshire arrived at the Canterville Chase, the ghost had almost become an invalid and was depressed.

When the ghost learnt that the Duke of Cheshire was a guest at the house, he wanted to show him that he had not lost his influence over the Duke's family. He planned to appear in from of the Duke in his celebrated impersonation of 'The Vampire Monk'. However, at the last moment, his terror of the twins prevented his leaving his room and the Duke slept peacefully.

Ans. 4. The Canterville Ghost was very conscious of his appearance and 'make-up'. In chapter two, as the ghost recalls his past experiences, he remembered his last appearance as 'Red Ruben, or the Strangled Babe' and the disturbances he had created on a June evening by merely playing ninepins with his own bones upon the tennis grounds. He considered himself as a true artist. In chapter 3, he recalled how he had played the character of 'Dumb Daniel, or the Suicide's Skeleton'. He played this role with great effect and considered it to be quite equal to his famous part of 'Martin the Maniac, or the Masked Mystery. In chapter 4, the ghost dressed as 'Black Issac, or the Huntsman of Hogley Woods' was roaming in the corridor at night when he met with a severe fall because the Twins had tied strings across the corridor. This insult enraged him and he decided to appear as 'Reckless Rupert, or the Headless Earl' the next night. It took the ghost three hours to put on his makeup. In the end of chapter 5, the ghost planned to impersonate 'The Vampire Monk, or the Bloodless Benedictine' in order to scare the Duke of Cheshire. However, his plan failed as his fear of the twins prevented him from leaving the room. The ghost considered himself as an artist and spent a lot of time in choosing his outfits and the roles he would play.

Ans 5. Mr. Hiram Otis is the middle-aged American ambassador to the royal court of England. He is a rational and pragmatic American Republican. He comes from a modern country which has everything that can be bought. He refuses to believe that Canterville Chase is haunted despite what his acquaintances say. Later, however, after the constant reappearance of the bloodstains in the library, he has to accept the existence of the disembodied spirit. His predominant qualities are his determination and his inflexibility. He is also rational, practical and pragmatic, in conclusion he is a true American. In the beginning of the novel, he believes that the ghost's existence was nonsense, then, when he personally meets the ghost, he is indifferent. He has more important things to do, making money, for example. Mr. Otis treats the ghost as if he is a noisy neighbour. Sir Simon, the ghost is stunned when Mr. Otis demands that he use the Rising Sun Lubricator to quiet his haunting chains so that the family may get some sleep. Mr. Otis is a calm man who scolds the twins for throwing pillows at the ghost, and then reasons that if the ghost will not use the lubricator, the family will take away his chains. He is also a loving and a concerned father. In the later chapters, when he came to know that Virginia is missing, he wasted not time and when looking for her. He and his family lives with a ghost without any inhibitions. The fact that he allows the ghost to be a part of the house shows that he is a practical man.

Ans.6. Mr. Otis was a practical man. He was not bothered by the fact that a ghost was present in the house that he was planning to buy. He told Lord Canterville that if there was a ghost in the house, he would buy both the ghost and the furniture. When he encountered the ghost face to face, he was not frightened, but offered a bottle of lubricator to the ghost so that he could oil his chains. When the ghost refused to accept his gift, he was more disturbed by the thought that he had to live with a noisy neighbour than by the fact that a ghost was present in the house.

Mrs. Otis was the wife of the American ambassador to the royal court of England. Before marriage, she was called Miss Lucretia R. Tappan and was well known for her beauty. She is described as ‘a very handsome, middle-aged woman, with fine eyes, and a superb profile’. The author praises her for having ‘a magnificent constitution’ and ‘a really wonderful amount of animal spirits’. She wasn't scared of the ghost and even asks him if he wants a remedy for his stomach. Like her husband, she was not disturbed by the fact that a ghost was living in their new home.

Washington Otis was the eldest child. He was ‘fair-haired’, ‘good-looking’ and an ‘excellent dancer’. He is said to display an excessive fondness towards the nobility. This sets him apart from his father who does not approve of titles and the enfeebling influences of the ‘pleasure-loving aristocracy’. He was also not afraid of the ghost and tried to remove the bloodstains several times using paragon detergent. He had a practical approach to the supernatural like the rest of his family.

The Otis Twins were the youngest members of the Otis family. They studied at Eton, an English boarding school. We are told that ‘The Star and Stripes’—a reference to the American flag and the fact they they were always getting canned. They are described as the only true Republicans as they practised total freedom in doing everything. They proved to be the Canterville ghost’s nemeses. They attacked him with pillows and pea shooters. They dressed up as ghosts to scare him off his wits. They set tripwires and butter slides in different parts of the house to make him fall. This shows that the Otis Twins like the rest of the family were very practical and not frightened by the ghost.



Virginia Otis was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Otis. She was born in a London suburb ‘shortly after Mrs. Otis returned from a trip to Athens’. She is said to be athletic and free-spirited, with golden hair and large blue eyes. She was a good rider who once raced and beat Lord Bilton. Virginia had a sense of right and wrong. She censured the ghost for murdering his poor wife. She had a great regard for her family. So, she took offence when the ghost called her family ‘horrid, rude, vulgar, and dishonest’. She encountered the ghost in the fifth chapter. She was initially frightened by his sight but was soon filled with pity and talked to him. During their conversation we come to know that Virginia was aware that the ghost was stealing her paints to refurbish the blood stain on the carpet. However, she didn’t tell it to anyone. Virginia, unlike her family was initially disturbed by the thought of a ghost living in their new home. As the novel comes to an end, Virginia emerges as a confident and brave girl, who helps the ghost to enter the garden of death. She was the key to ghost’s redemption.