

1 Cast:
2 Announcer
3 Cabbie
4 Olivia
5 The English:
6 Sir Simon de Canterville, (300+) Ghost
7 Lady Eleanor de Canterville, (300+) his
8 dead wife
9 Mrs. Umney, (60) housekeeper
10 Cecil, (17) young Duke of Cheshire
11 Mover
12 The Americans:
13 Hiram Otis, (40) American Minister
14 Mrs. Lucretia Otis (36) his wife
15 Washington Otis, (18) know-it-all
16 Virginia Otis, (15) sweet young thing
17 Grover and Oscar Otis, (12) the twins

18 ANNOUNCER 19 Nocturne Boulevard.

19 CABBIE Nocturne Boulevard? Not far. When you hit
20 Howard, hang a right. Howard meets Phillip
21 at a weird kind of angle, then you cross
22 James and Poe. You can't miss Nocturne -
23 it's just past the automat.

24 ANNOUNCER 19 Nocturne Boulevard, your address for
25 suspenseful stories of the speculative,
26 strange, and supernatural. Tonight's story
27 is The Canterville Ghost, by Oscar Wilde,
28 adapted for radio by Julie Hoverson.

29 SOUND KNOCK ON DOOR. DOOR OPENS.

30 OLIVIA [HOST, sultry voice] Yes. This is 19 Nocturne
31 Boulevard, won't you step inside?

32 SOUND FOOTSTEPS

1 OLIVIA Did you have any trouble finding it? What
2 do you mean, what kind of a place is it?
3 Why, it's an English Castle, can't you tell?
4 Where else would you find an ancestral
5 ghost?

6 MUSIC

7 SOUND HEAVY FOOTSTEPS, LOW MOAN OF EFFORT, HEAVY
8 SOMETHING BEING DROPPED [play up as if a
9 ghost, then]

10 MOVER Ow! Leave off! OK, One, two... [grunt of
11 effort]

12 SOUND HEAVY FOOTSTEPS GO OFF. THE OTIS FAMILY IS
13 MOVING IN.

14 HIRAM [self satisfied] Yes, that will do nicely.

15 SOUND SHARP FOOTSTEPS AMONG THE HUBBUB

16 MRS. UMNEY Mr. Otis, Sir?

17 HIRAM Yes, my good woman?

18 MRS. UMNEY Sir, where are the Canterville portraits?

19 HIRAM Those? I'm returning them to his Lordship.
20 I'm quite sure he didn't mean them to go
21 with the house. They're rather ugly old
22 gewgaws, to be perfectly frank. Out with
23 the old, in with the new.

24 MRS. UMNEY [muttered] These're the ugly new gewgaws,
25 then?

26 HIRAM Hm?

27 MRS. UMNEY This is your family, then, sir?

28 HIRAM What is your name, my good woman?

1 MRS. UMNEY Mrs. Umney. I've been housekeeper here at
2 Canterville hall for--

3 HIRAM Oh, yes, we did take on all the fixtures.
4 Well, Madam, we Americans don't hold with
5 all this "sir" nonsense. You can call me
6 Mr. Otis, just like anyone else.

7 MRS. UMNEY [servilely] Of course, Mr. Otis. Certainly
8 Mr. Otis.

9 HIRAM Stop with the curtseying, it's bad for your
10 knees. Ask my wife - she's campaigned
11 against it, you know.

12 MRS. UMNEY That would be Lady - pardon - Mrs. Otis in
13 the portrait with you?

14 HIRAM Yes - lovely woman, though she does tend to
15 look a bit cross-eyed when forced to sit
16 staring into a lens for time on end. Still
17 it's a lovely shot. This is the children.
18 Washington, in back - he's even taller now.
19 Must remember to get another study taken.
20 They grow so fast, don't they?

21 MRS. UMNEY Yes sir. Mr. Otis, sir.

22 HIRAM The twins, Oscar and Grover - like weeds, as
23 well - are going to Eton. They'll be home
24 with us until the school year begins.

25 MRS. UMNEY And the young lady?

26 HIRAM [with warmth] Virginia. She is just the
27 perfect doll - smart as a whip. Takes right
28 after her mother that way. And the way she
29 rides - she raced old Lord Bilton twice

1 round the park and won by a length and a
2 half. That Cecil fellow, Duke of Cheshire,
3 proposed for her on the spot, but they're
4 both much too young, and we Americans don't
5 hold much with titles.

6 MRS. UMNEY [muttered] Tell that to the Vanderbilts.
7 [out loud] And this must be... your father?

8 HIRAM [laughs uproariously] Ho-ho! No, that's
9 President Cleveland, our country's leader.
10 You know, a bit like your British Queen
11 Victoria, except that we choose ours.
12 [pause] And they don't carry on quite so
13 long.

14 MRS. UMNEY Ah.

15 SOUND DOOR OPENS, FOOTSTEPS

16 MRS. OTIS Dearest, can you do something with the
17 twins, they've gone quite mad in the
18 conservatory.

19 HIRAM Boys will be boys.

20 SOUND FOOTSTEPS OFF, DOOR

21 MRS. OTIS Mrs. Umney, why what's the matter?

22 MRS. UMNEY Ma'am? I'm just not used to your American
23 ways, I expect.

24 MRS. OTIS I'm so sorry for you. Well.

25 SOUND FOOTSTEPS START TO LEAVE, HESITATE

26 MRS. OTIS Oh, there is something you could help with -
27 there's a terrible stain near the fireplace

1 in the sitting room. Would you be a dear
2 and see that it gets cleaned up?

3 MRS. UMNEY [ominously] The bloodstain?

4 MRS. OTIS How horrid! I don't at all care for blood-
5 stains in a sitting-room. It cannot
6 possibly be hygienic.

7 MRS. UMNEY It is the blood of Lady Eleanor de
8 Canterville, murdered on that very spot by
9 her own husband, Sir Simon de Canterville,
10 in 1575. Sir Simon's guilty spirit still
11 haunts the Chase, though HIS body has never
12 been found.

13 MRS. OTIS It must be removed immediately--

14 MRS. UMNEY The blood-stain has been much admired by
15 tourists, and cannot be removed.

16 MRS. OTIS Nonsense. [calling] Washington!!

17 MRS. UMNEY [mood broken] What? Ma'am?

18 SOUND THUNDERING FEET COMING DOWN STAIRCASE

19 WASHINGTON Yes, mother?

20 MRS. OTIS Do you have some of that new cleaning
21 solution in your kit?

22 WASHINGTON Pinkerton's Champion Stain Remover and
23 Paragon Detergent? I'll fetch it directly.

24 MRS. UMNEY The blood stain cannot be cleaned, ma'am.
25 It's a proven fact. Many have tried. Many
26 more have faced the ghost and were never the
27 same again.

28 MRS. OTIS Ah, but this is a patented formulation.

1 MUSIC

2 SOUND OUTSIDE. TWO HORSES' HOOVES MOVING SLOWLY,

3 AN OCCASIONAL WHINNY

4 CECIL I'm frightfully pleased you're so nearby,

5 Miss Otis. I mean, we can... go riding

6 together... often.

7 VIRGINIA Cecil. Or... I'm so sorry, I've forgotten,

8 what does one call a Duke?

9 CECIL It's Your Grace, but you needn't--

10 VIRGINIA But I should at least KNOW. And an Earl?

11 CECIL [quietly] I would rather you thought of me

12 as more than merely a tutor.

13 VIRGINIA How DO you keep them all straight?

14 [catching up] What?

15 CECIL [earnest] You know how I feel.

16 VIRGINIA I also, which is why this is all

17 particularly important. Just in case... In

18 case... [gasps]

19 BOTH [Take a breath, as if about to speak, then

20 check themselves]

21 [SLIGHT PAUSE AS THEY BOTH CALM DOWN A BIT, CLICK TO THE

22 HORSES, ETC.]

23 CECIL Oh, Virginia, I hate the thought of you

24 living in this blasted old pile.

25 VIRGINIA [pleased] You called me Virginia.

26 CECIL My apologies, Miss Otis.

1 VIRGINIA Silly. Cecil, I've been trying for ages to
2 get you to call me--

3 CECIL It's the ghost!

4 VIRGINIA The ghost's name is Virginia?

5 CECIL No. Your father cannot have heard about it,
6 or he'd never have put you in such danger.

7 VIRGINIA While he's not actually against them, father
8 generally avoids spirits.

9 CECIL [ominously, admitting] My own grand-uncle
10 once bet a hundred guineas that he would
11 play dice with the ghost, and was found the
12 next morning on the floor of the card-room
13 in such a paralytic state that, though he
14 lived to a great age, he was never able to
15 say anything but "Double Sixes."

16 VIRGINIA Backgammon, was it?

17 CECIL It isn't important! It's simply not safe!

18 MUSIC

19 MRS. OTIS It's simply not safe, I tell you! That
20 housekeeper fainting all about the place,
21 and all over cleaning up a silly bloodstain.

22 HIRAM Hmm...

23 SOUND RATTLE OF A PAGE TURNING IN A BOOK

24 MRS. OTIS What if it happens again? What if she's
25 holding crockery? What do you do with a
26 woman who faints?

27 HIRAM Yes, dear.

28 MRS. OTIS [sweetly] Dearest, your nose has fallen off.

1 HIRAM Oh, has it? Good.

2 MRS. OTIS You're not listening to me!

3 HIRAM Gracious! Do you hear that?

4 MRS. OTIS What, over the sound of my own voice?

5 Heaven forbid!

6 HIRAM Shh.

7 SOUND MUFFLED, AND SLOWLY GETTING CLOSER, HEAVY

8 FOOTFALLS AND CHAINS RATTLING. THEY CONTINUE

9 UNTIL NOTED

10 HIRAM Now that is just too much.

11 SOUND BEDCLOTHES FLUNG ASIDE, SLIPPED FOOTSTEPS.

12 HIRAM We'll see about--

13 SOUND DOOR IS FLUNG OPEN

14 SOUND HEAVY FOOTSTEPS AND CHAINS ARE NO LONGER

15 MUFFLED.

16 SIMON [off - low moaning]

17 HIRAM Now see here!

18 SIMON [moan interrupts, then comes back stronger]

19 MRS. OTIS [unworried, off] Is it the twins?

20 HIRAM I don't think so.

21 SIMON [insistent ghostly moaning]

22 HIRAM No, it's certainly not the twins. Hold it

23 right there.

24 SIMON [moan interrupts quizzically]

25 SOUND SLIPPED FOOTSTEPS, DRAWER PULLED OUT,

26 RUMMAGING

1 MRS. OTIS Should I join you?

2 HIRAM No need. Though he is quite a curiosity -

3 looks like a scraggly old feller all done up

4 in chains and ragged old-style clothes.

5 SIMON [off - moaning again, suppressed fury]

6 HIRAM Now where did I - Aha!

7 SOUND RUMMAGING STOPS, SLIPPERED FOOTSTEPS

8 HIRAM My dear sir, I really must insist on your

9 oiling those chains, and have brought you

10 for that purpose a small bottle of the

11 Tammany Rising Sun Lubricator.

12 SIMON [moaning stops]

13 HIRAM It is said to be completely efficacious upon

14 one application, and there are several

15 testimonials to that effect on the wrapper.

16 I shall leave it here for you, and will be

17 happy to supply more, should you require it.

18 SOUND SMALL BOTTLE SET DOWN, LIGHT FOOTSTEPS, DOOR

19 CLOSES DECISIVELY

20 SIMON [bellow of rage, then moaning until noted]

21 SOUND BOTTLE SLAPPED, ROLLS ACROSS TABLE, CLATTERS

22 TO FLOOR.

23 SOUND TWO HEAVY FOOTSTEPS, HEAVY THUD ON WALL

24 ACCOMPANIED BY CHAIN RATTLING

25 OSCAR Get em!

26 SOUND PILLOW FLIES THROUGH THE AIR, HITS THE WALL

27 GROVER Did I score?

1 SIMON [one last shriek, and out]

2 OSCAR Tsk. Nope.

3 MUSIC SPOOKY

4 SOUND AGITATED PACING, ROCKING CHAIR

5 SIMON [bellowing and outraged] A Pillow! At my
6 HEAD!

7 ELEANOR [complacent but needling] I suppose it's a
8 good thing you were wearing it, then.

9 SIMON Not if they'd hit me! I'm not certain I
10 fastened it on completely. It's never been
11 an issue!

12 ELEANOR You've gone without a challenge for far too
13 long.

14 SIMON A challenge!! A challenge! Who needs a
15 bloody challenge when I have you to torment
16 me?

17 ELEANOR Every time you get frustrated you turn the
18 argument on me. If you didn't want me
19 haunting you, you should've never killed me.

20 SIMON Tcha!

21 ELEANOR Ruined my favorite bodice, as well.

22 SIMON Your bloody bodice.

23 ELEANOR Precisely.

24 SIMON Hush! These ... people... Have no respect
25 for artistry. When I think back on the
26 Dowager Duchess, frightened into a fit; the
27 four housemaids, who went into hysterics
28 when I merely grinned at them through the

1 curtains; old Madame de Tremouillac, who
 2 woke to find me, as a skeleton, seated by
 3 the fire reading her diary, and was confined
 4 to her bed for six weeks with brain fever--

5 ELEANOR [dry] Yes, yes, you're quite handy with the
 6 ladies.

7 SIMON Shut up, wife! What about wicked Lord
 8 Canterville, who I left choking on the knave
 9 of diamonds because he had cheated by means
 10 of that very card, so I made him swallow it.
 11 That was justice!

12 ELEANOR Oh, yes, justice for men and torment for
 13 women. So like a man. What did poor Lady
 14 Stutfield, ever do to you? You left her
 15 obliged to wear a black velvet band round
 16 her throat to hide the mark of five fingers
 17 burnt upon her white skin.

18 SIMON [avid] She drowned herself at last in the
 19 carp-pond at the end of the King's Walk.

20 ELEANOR Did she cheat at cards as well?

21 SIMON [grudgingly] No.

22 ELEANOR Admit it, you just like the attention.
 23 Women are so much more --

24 SIMON Biddable?

25 ELEANOR I was going to say demonstrative. I know
 26 how you adore an appreciative audience.
 27 Women are allowed hysterics, while men are
 28 limited to "good god!", a little gibbering,

1 and then shooting themselves in the pantry.
 2 There's simply not much in between.

3 SIMON [sulky] Or offering you oil for your chains
 4 - the impertinence!!

5 ELEANOR What do you plan to do about it, my lord?

6 SIMON Aha! I was thinking of reprising my costume
 7 as "Gaunt Gibeon, the Blood-sucker of Bexley
 8 Moor," and playing ninepins with my own
 9 bones upon the lawn-tennis ground.

10 ELEANOR Perhaps Americans do not play ninepins?

11 SIMON No? I think the point will not fail. It is
 12 bones... [thinking] Or perhaps ... Yes...
 13 "Reckless Rupert, or the Headless Earl."

14 ELEANOR Oh, my lord. You know that one takes hours
 15 to put on. Do you even know where both
 16 horse pistols are?

17 SIMON Bah! I am an artist. I laugh at complex
 18 preparation. [chuckling] I haven't pulled
 19 out old Rupert for some fifty years--

20 ELEANOR Seventy.

21 SIMON Seventy? Really? Where does the time go?
 22 [warming up again] Not since the night I
 23 frightened pretty Lady Barbara and she broke
 24 off her engagement with Lord Canterville's
 25 grandfather, and ran away with Jack
 26 Castletown, declaring that nothing would
 27 induce her to marry into a family that
 28 allowed such a horrible phantom to walk up
 29 and down the terrace at twilight.

1 ELEANOR [bored] ...and then he was shot in a duel.

2 SIMON [running over her] Poor Jack was afterwards
3 shot in a duel by Lord Canterville

4 ELEANOR [bored] You sound like the social pages.

5 SIMON [trying to drown her out] --and Lady Barbara
6 died of a broken heart, so, in every way, it
7 was a great success.

8 ELEANOR Yes, yes, yes. You recall I was present.

9 SIMON I am merely reiterating--

10 ELEANOR Reiterate away. I shan't return until you
11 are quite through.

12 SIMON Oh, if I only could believe that, I would
13 never stop.

14 ELEANOR Just as big fish eat little fish, my own
15 good lord, ghosts are never truly alone.

16 MUSIC

17 SOUND GENTEEL BREAKFAST NOISES

18 MRS. UMNEY [off, screams]

19 VIRGINIA Oh no!

20 WASHINGTON What?

21 MRS. OTIS Good gracious, she's at it again.

22 HIRAM I'll just go and see--

23 MRS. OTIS No, no. You finish your breakfast, Hiram,
24 dear. I shall see to the household.

25 SOUND FOOTSTEPS, DOOR

26 MRS. UMNEY [praying, slightly hysterical]

1 MRS. OTIS [coming on] What is the matter now?

2 MRS. UMNEY [spooooooky] Look!!! The bloodstain! I
3 told you that it could never be removed!

4 MRS. OTIS Oh. How unusual. I wonder if there is a
5 leak somewhere. [calling] Washington?

6 SOUND EAGER FOOTSTEPS

7 WASHINGTON Yes, Mother?

8 MRS. OTIS I thought you said you had dealt with this?

9 WASHINGTON Well, now doesn't that just take the cake?

10 MRS. OTIS Pray don't be vulgar.

11 MRS. UMNEY [muffled snort]

12 VIRGINIA [coming on] What's going on?

13 WASHINGTON Mother, I give you my solemn oath - that
14 stain was gone. I guess I'll just have at
15 it again.

16 MUSIC TIME PASSES

17 SOUND GENTEEL BREAKFAST NOISES

18 HIRAM Shall we? I made a particular point of
19 locking the door last night, so there can be
20 no chance of outside interference.

21 MRS. OTIS Yes, lets.

22 SOUND DOOR OPENS

23 OSCAR Me first!

24 GROVER No, me!

25 SOUND SCUFFLE, RUNNING FOOTSTEPS

26 GROVER It's back!

1 MUSIC TIME PASSES

2 SOUND GENTEEL BREAKFAST NOISES

3 WASHINGTON ...that's crimson, rust, burnt sienna, and
4 maroon. So far. Anyone?

5 HIRAM Perhaps the color changes like leaves in the
6 fall? I think I shall lay odds on pumpkin.

7 WASHINGTON I am more inclined to believe, father, that
8 there is a scientific basis for the
9 inconsistent pigmentation. Some chemical
10 interaction between the nature of ectoplasm
11 and Pinkerton's Champion Stain Remover. All
12 I need to do is find another, similar
13 ghostly stain and compare the results.

14 HIRAM Sound thinking, my boy.

15 MRS. OTIS Well, I'm in the mood for a bright cherry
16 red myself. Virginia?

17 VIRGINIA [subdued, almost sulky] I have no opinion on
18 the matter.

19 SOUND DOOR SLAMS OPEN

20 GROVER It's green!!

21 OSCAR Emerald green!

22 VIRGINIA [very quiet wail, then going off] Oh, no!

23 SOUND GIRL'S RUNNING FEET GO OFF

24 MUSIC

25 SOUND RUMMAGING THROUGH PILES OF CLOTHES

26 SIMON [off, muffled] Have you seen my red slouch
27 hat?

1 ELEANOR It is no longer my responsibility to look
2 after your garments, husband.

3 SIMON Hmph.

4 SOUND MORE RUMMAGING

5 SIMON Which winding sheet do you think will be
6 most effective, the ones with the ruffles at
7 the cuffs, or the hideous brown stains?

8 ELEANOR My lord - those aren't your brown stains. I
9 believe a mouse has littered in your sheet.

10 SIMON Eugh.

11 SOUND FABRIC FALLS TO FLOOR

12 SIMON Aren't you even curious? I mean about what
13 I intend to do?

14 ELEANOR Not really. [sigh] Pray enlighten me. If
15 you must.

16 SIMON You'll be singing a different tune when you
17 hear--

18 ELEANOR Begin, my lord - we haven't all day.

19 SIMON Very well. See this rusty dagger?

20 ELEANOR Yay, verily. One rusty dagger. Noted.

21 SIMON I will make my way quietly to Washington
22 Otis's room, you know Washington - the
23 interfering knave who repeatedly cleans my
24 bloody-- well... bloodstain.

25 ELEANOR My bloodstain. Bright boy.

26 SIMON Shush. Here, you be Washington.

27 ELEANOR I haven't the height.

1 SIMON [angry] I mean, you stand in and I shall
2 show you what I intend! [back to glee] I
3 will gibber at him from the foot of the bed,
4 and stab myself - once, twice, thrice! - in
5 the throat to the sound of low music.
6 Having reduced the reckless and foolhardy
7 youth to a condition of abject terror...
8 [prompting] Terror!

9 ELEANOR [flat] Oh, terror!

10 SIMON [sigh] I will proceed to the bedroom of the
11 parents. Now you are Mrs. Otis.

12 ELEANOR To do that I shall have to secure some
13 exceedingly plain underclothes.

14 SIMON [growl] Woman! I will place a clammy hand
15 on Mrs. Otis's forehead--

16 ELEANOR [flat] Oh, clammy.

17 SIMON --while I hiss into her trembling husband's
18 ear the awful secrets of the charnel-house.

19 ELEANOR He'll probably tell you of some new patented
20 method for charnelling. I suppose that poor
21 girl will get the worst of it, since she's
22 the only one even a mite sympathetic?

23 SIMON I... [almost sheepish] I ...don't think so.
24 She's done nothing at all to annoy me, even
25 though she could easily... A few hollow
26 groans from the wardrobe will suffice.

27 ELEANOR You're becoming soft in your old age.

28 SIMON I am merely saving my best efforts for the
29 wretched twins...

1 ELEANOR Shall I be one of them?

2 SIMON No need.

3 ELEANOR Oh, prithee my lord. I wish to realize the
4 full impact of your cunning plan.

5 SIMON Truly? Well, go ahead then.

6 ELEANOR I shall be Grover. He has the sweeter
7 disposition.

8 SIMON Be whichever you wish to be, but be quiet!
9 [deep breath] I will enter the room, in the
10 form of a green, icy-cold corpse--

11 SOUND WHOOSH THUMP OF A PILLOW

12 ELEANOR Ha-ha! [aping the twins' laughter]

13 SIMON WOMAN!!!!

14 MUSIC STING

15 MUSIC WALTZ

16 CECIL You are so brave. And so lovely tonight.

17 VIRGINIA You dance divinely, Cecil, but this must be
18 our last waltz or people will talk.

19 CECIL My cousin says your brother is an excellent
20 partner as well.

21 VIRGINIA Oh, yes. He is well suited for diplomacy.

22 CECIL I wish we could dance all night and you
23 never need return to that moldy old pile.

24 VIRGINIA Fainting aside, Mrs. Umney is a very good
25 housekeeper.

1 CECIL Tomorrow is the anniversary of Lady
 2 Eleanor's death. The ghost will certainly
 3 leap upon the propitious moment.

4 MUSIC

5 SIMON [soliloquizing] Ah! The propitious moment!
 6 The clock strikes the quarter--

7 SOUND CLOCK STRIKES THE QUARTER

8 SIMON The moon hides her face behind a cloud. All
 9 is in readiness, and the night holds its
 10 stygian breath.

11 SOUND STEALTHY SQUEAKING FOOTSTEPS

12 SIMON And now Washington, screw your courage to
 13 the sticking point you may, but I will have
 14 you unstuck! [begins a moan]

15 SOUND TWO MORE STEPS

16 SIMON [moan become a shriek of fear]

17 SOUND WHOOSH OF GHOST LEAVING

18 HIRAM [snoring]

19 MRS. OTIS [waking up] Huh? [matter of fact] Hiram!
 20 Wake up!

21 HIRAM Yes, dearest?

22 MRS. OTIS Do you hear ...something?

23 HIRAM Is it that ghost fellow again? [listens]
 24 No, I cannot say I actually hear anything.

25 MRS. OTIS Hmm. Must be the twins.

26 HIRAM [snoring]

27 MUSIC

1 SOUND AGITATED PACING, ROCKING CHAIR THROUGHOUT

2 ELEANOR [flatly amused] A ghost.

3 SOUND CRUMPLING OF PAPER

4 SIMON [terrified] YES! A Ghost! Its head was
5 bald and burnished, its face round, and fat,
6 and white. From the eyes streamed rays of
7 scarlet light, the mouth was a wide well of
8 fire, and a hideous garment, much like mine
9 own--

10 ELEANOR Lacking the mouse insults.

11 SIMON --like to mine own, swathed its Titan form.
12 On its breast was a placard with strange
13 writing in antique characters--

14 SOUND RATTLE OF HEAVY PAPER

15 SIMON Doubtless some record of wild sins, some
16 awful calendar of crime, some--

17 ELEANOR Why not read it and see?

18 SIMON See?

19 ELEANOR See what it says.

20 SIMON [hesitates] No.

21 ELEANOR Why take it, then?

22 SIMON [mutters something]

23 ELEANOR Speak up, my lord.

24 SIMON [through gritted teeth] I found I had just
25 clutched at it as I left. I have no need to
26 know--

27 ELEANOR Afraid?

1 SIMON AFRAID! [unconvincing] No.

2 ELEANOR Perhaps because he is the more terrifying
3 ghost?

4 SIMON Nonsense! I have merely never chanced to
5 SEE a ghost - except in a looking glass.

6 ELEANOR Give it me, ninny. I shall read it.

7 SIMON You dare--

8 ELEANOR I'll call you coward in an instant--

9 SIMON I WILL READ IT! [muttering as he reads,
10 then a sound of outrage!]

11 ELEANOR So very wicked, my lord?

12 SOUND PAPER BEING VICIOUSLY CRUMPLED

13 SIMON [grim] Those damned children! They made it!

14 ELEANOR Made a ghost? I would have thought murder
15 was a bit outside their purview.

16 SIMON AAArghh!!

17 SOUND PAPER BEING SNATCHED AWAY

18 ELEANOR Argh, indeed. [reading] YE OTIS GHOSTE, Ye
19 Onlie True and Originale Spook, Beware of Ye
20 Imitationes. All others are counterfeite.

21 SIMON No more games! [bellowing] When Chanticleer
22 has sounded twice his merry horn, deeds of
23 blood will be wrought, and murder shall walk
24 abroad with silent feet!

25 ELEANOR That would be you?

26 SOUND ROOSTER CROWS - ONCE.

27 [PAUSE, WAITING]

1 SIMON [muttered] Come on.

2 ELEANOR Perhaps you should go frighten it.

3 SIMON [muttered] Once more - for daddy.

4 ELEANOR It's not going to happen.

5 SIMON Nonsense, it always happens.

6 ELEANOR [pause] Nay. I hear nothing.

7 SIMON Perdition seize the naughty fowl, I have
8 seen the day when, with my stout spear, I
9 would have run him through the gorge, and
10 made him crow for me an 'twere in death! [a
11 bit whiny] Every time, throughout all known
12 history, that such an oath has been sworn,
13 chanticleer has sounded his blasted horn
14 twice. Where is its respect for tradition?

15 ELEANOR Perhaps, dear husband, it is an American
16 rooster.

17 MUSIC

18 SOUND TWO HORSES REINING IN FROM A GALLOP

19 VIRGINIA [laughing] I let you win!

20 CECIL [teasing] Nonsense. Good breeding.

21 VIRGINIA Somehow your blue blood makes you faster?

22 CECIL Not mine. The horse.

23 VIRGINIA [chuckles]

24 SOUND HORSES WALKING

25 CECIL Have you been well since I saw you last?

26 VIRGINIA Yes, very. No ghost.

27 CECIL None?

1 VIRGINIA I warned everyone about the anniversary, but
2 nothing - well - a turnip ghost was found in
3 the upper hall, but I am quite certain that
4 can be attributed to my brothers.

5 CECIL How ... remarkable.

6 VIRGINIA Cecil, would you do me a tremendous favor?

7 CECIL Anything... Virginia.

8 VIRGINIA Would you-- Could you take my horse to the
9 stable? I fear I've torn my habit and want
10 to get upstairs before anyone spies me.

11 MUSIC

12 SOUND [OFF SLIGHTLY] LIGHT ECHOEY FOOTSTEPS

13 SIMON [gusty sigh]

14 SOUND [COMING ON] FOOTSTEPS CONTINUE

15 VIRGINIA Hello? [gasp] You!

16 SIMON [gasp] You!

17 VIRGINIA [anticipating being scared] Ahh! [pause,
18 nothing happens, confused] Oh!

19 SIMON Pfft. Do not fret yourself, girl. I cannot
20 seem to gather myself for the effort. This
21 is the one room where I can be truly alone.
22 My wife haunts me in every other chamber.

23 VIRGINIA Should I leave you--?

24 SIMON Stay. For a moment. [overly casual] If
25 you wish.

26 VIRGINIA My brothers are going back to Eton tomorrow,
27 and if you behave, no one will annoy you.

1 SIMON Behave myself? Absurd. I must rattle my
2 chains and walk about at night. It is my
3 only reason for existing.

4 VIRGINIA That is no reason at all.

5 SIMON Why else would I be here?

6 VIRGINIA Mrs. Umney told us - you killed your wife.

7 SIMON It was purely a family matter. My wife was
8 very plain, never had my ruffs properly
9 starched, and knew nothing about cookery.

10 VIRGINIA It is very wrong to kill anyone.

11 SIMON Oh? Her brothers starved me to death.

12 VIRGINIA Oh, Mr. Ghost -- I mean Sir Simon - I have a
13 sandwich in my case, would you like it?

14 SIMON I never eat anything now; [beat, softening]
15 but it is very kind of you. You are much
16 nicer than your horrid, rude, vulgar,
17 dishonest family.

18 VIRGINIA Stop it! It is you who are rude, and
19 horrid, and... and as for dishonesty! You
20 stole my paints for your ridiculous
21 bloodstain. First you took all my reds and
22 I couldn't do sunsets, then it just got
23 silly - who ever heard of emerald-green
24 blood?

25 SIMON [meek] What was I to do? It is very
26 difficult to get real blood. Your brother
27 began it all with his Paragon Detergent, so
28 I saw no reason why I should not have your
29 paints.

1 VIRGINIA [annoyed, decisive] Good evening! I will
2 go and ask papa to get the twins an extra
3 week's holiday.

4 SIMON Please don't go, Miss Virginia. I am so
5 unhappy, and I really don't know what to do.
6 I want to sleep and I cannot.

7 VIRGINIA That's quite absurd! It is very difficult
8 sometimes to keep awake, especially at
9 church, but even babies know how to sleep,
10 and they are not very clever.

11 SIMON I have not slept for three hundred years,
12 and I am so tired.

13 VIRGINIA Have you no place where you can sleep?

14 SIMON [wistful] Far away beyond the pine-woods,
15 there is a little garden. The grass grows
16 long and deep, with great white stars of the
17 hemlock flower, and the nightingale sings
18 all night long. The cold crystal moon looks
19 down, and the yew-tree spreads out its giant
20 arms over the sleepers.

21 VIRGINIA [awed] You mean the Garden of Death.

22 SIMON Yes, death. Death must be so beautiful. To
23 lie in the soft brown earth, and listen...
24 to silence. To have no yesterday, and no
25 to-morrow, to be at peace. You can help me.
26 You can open for me the portals of death's
27 house, for love is always with you, and love
28 is stronger than death.

29 VIRGINIA How could I--?

1 SIMON You must weep with me for my sins, because
2 without remorse, I have no tears, and pray
3 with me for my soul, because I have no
4 faith. Then, perhaps, the angel of death
5 will have mercy on me. [pauses, waiting,
6 then sighs in despair]

7 VIRGINIA [deep breath] I am not afraid, and I will
8 ask the angel to have mercy on you.

9 MUSIC

10 HIRAM Virginia is nowhere to be found. Even the
11 gypsies are helping search for her.
12 Washington, my boy? [confidential] The
13 carp-pond?

14 WASHINGTON Nothing.

15 HIRAM Good. Don't tell your mother we checked.
16 The poor woman is already nearly prostrate.

17 CECIL It is the ghost. I know it! He was jealous
18 of our happiness and spirited her away! If
19 only you had allowed our engagement, sir,
20 none of this would have--

21 HIRAM Balderdash. First thing in the morning, I
22 will engage Scotland Yard--

23 SOUND CLOCK STRIKES TWELVE - LOUD CRASH

24 SOUND MANY RUNNING FEET

25 EVERYONE [reacts to Virginia's reappearance]

26 HIRAM Good heavens! child, where have you been?
27 Cecil and I have been riding all over the
28 country looking for you, and your mother has
29 been frightened to death.

1 VIRGINIA I have been with the ghost.

2 CECIL [rather melodramatic gasp] How did you
3 escape?

4 VIRGINIA Oh, Cecil, he is at peace, now. He had been
5 very wicked, but he was really sorry for all
6 that he had done, and now-- [almost a sob]

7 SOUND DOOR FLUNG OPEN, FOOTSTEPS

8 MRS. OTIS My own darling! Thank God you are found;
9 you must never leave my side again! What is
10 this?

11 VIRGINIA Sir Simon gave me this box before he died.

12 WASHINGTON But he's been dead for centuries.

13 VIRGINIA Only half dead, I think would be more
14 accurate. Now he's entirely dead - finally
15 able to sleep.

16 GROVER What's in the box?

17 OSCAR Yeah! Open it!

18 HIRAM Your sister can open the box or not as she
19 pleases. She's not to be ordered around by
20 monkeys like you two.

21 SOUND SMALL WOODEN BOX OPENS

22 MRS. OTIS Goodness!

23 MRS. UMNEY The long-lost Canterville jewels!

24 SOUND BODY DROP

25 MRS. OTIS [sigh] She's fainted again.

26 MUSIC

27 SOUND GENTLE GIRLISH SNORING

1 ELEANOR [coming on, ghostly groans]
2 SOUND LADYLIKE CHAINS
3 VIRGINIA [waking] Huh? Sir Simon?
4 ELEANOR [somewhat annoyed] No. You've seen to that,
5 so now I have nothing better--
6 VIRGINIA Are you Lady Eleanor?
7 ELEANOR [surprised] Yes. He-- he told you--?
8 VIRGINIA He gave me something for you.
9 SOUND DRAWER PULLS OUT
10 VIRGINIA There.
11 ELEANOR A handkerchief?
12 VIRGINIA Open it.
13 ELEANOR But there's nothing--
14 VIRGINIA Look closer.
15 ELEANOR A spot?
16 VIRGINIA A tear.
17 ELEANOR [stunned] He ... cried--?
18 VIRGINIA He said he was very sorry for having killed
19 you.
20 ELEANOR [skeptical] Oh? He did?
21 VIRGINIA And for ruining your best bodice.
22 ELEANOR [believing] Oh!
23 VIRGINIA He hoped you could forgive him now and move
24 on as well. He hopes you will join him,
25 where the nightingales sing, and he can give
26 you a bouquet of white flowers.

1 ELEANOR Yes. [sigh] I could do with some sleep.

2 MUSIC

3 CLOSER

4 OLIVIA Now that you know how to find us, you'll
5 have to come back. Maybe next week? Don't
6 be a stranger - we have enough of those
7 already...

8 ANNOUNCER In tonight's production of [TITLE], written
9 by _____ and directed by _____
10 [MAIN CHARACTER] was played by _____,
11 [ETC.], and our lovely hostess Olivia was
12 _____. Sound effects by _____,
13 music by _____, and the 19 Nocturne
14 Boulevard theme was composed by Kevin
15 MacLeod. I am your announcer,
16 _____, and this is ART -
17 American Radio Theater.

18

19