

Bloodstain on the Floor*

‘You’ll be sorry you bought the house,’ people told Mr Hiram B. Otis. ‘Everyone knows that a ghost* lives in it.’

Mr Otis was a rich American who had just bought a fine, old house called Canterville Chase. It had been the country home of Lord* Canterville, who had been completely honest with Mr Otis about his reasons for selling it.

‘We haven’t liked living in the place ourselves since an old aunt of mine was terribly frightened by the ghost,’ Lord Canterville told Mr Otis. ‘Two skeleton* hands touched her as she was dressing for dinner. And I must tell you, Mr Otis, that several other members of my family have also seen it. My wife herself cannot sleep at night because of the noises in the library*...’

‘I’ll take the furniture and the ghost, Sir,’ answered Mr Otis. ‘I come from a modern country where money can buy anything. If there’s a ghost here, I’ll send it to America. Back home*, they’ll pay to see it!’

*In English high society, a lord, like Lord Canterville, comes below a duke. A duke, like the Duke of Cheshire who appears later in the story, is second in social position only to the King or Queen.



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