



The Canterville Ghost

Oscar Wilde

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The Canterville Ghost by Oscar Wilde

The Canterville Ghost is certainly one of Oscar Wilde's most widely known short stories - the first story by the author to be published and a story that has been adapted to film and the theatre so often that chances are you have seen it either on TV or performed on stage (it even has a musical adaptation, starring Douglas Fairbanks and there is a Russian opera based on Wilde's story, too). Though the story is geared toward teenagers, it is equally enjoyable for younger and more mature readers.

The Canterville Ghost is a genuine ghost story with a Wildean twist. The setting is an old castle, the protagonist being a ghost that has been having a great time for 300 years playing scary tricks on those who lived in the country, until one day, when an American family moves into the castle and drive him away. The indifference of the adults and the aggressive behavior of the kids - they throw pillows at the poor ghost at one point - infuriate the ghost, but it is also a member of the family who finally helps him, so the story wraps up in a very touching ending.

The story certainly offers great entertainment, whether on paper support or in an audio format. It is an example of Oscar Wilde's humor and writing genius at their best, mixing dramatic elements, jokes and satire in a balanced and delightful manner. Wilde also makes the most of the depiction of cultural contrasts between the British and the American way of thinking and entertains with the witty play of words so characteristic of his prose

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