SPOOKED!

Adapted from Oscar Wilde's
The Canterville Ghost

by Sean Aita

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(Vienna's English Theatre Gastspiel GmbH)
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@ All visitors to Canterville Hall

Have you ever visited an old, historical building in Austria, or even in England? Heavy old furniture, creaky floorboards, a gallery of painted portraits in golden frames … and a guide who tells you about the history and the people who lived there (don't yawn!!)?

In Britain most of these manor houses belong to aristocrats and are open to the public, so everybody can go and visit them – during daytime. Which is good, because ghosts don't show during daytime! And there is at least one ghost haunting most of these castles. What … you don't believe in ghosts? They are just in some people's imagination because they've been watching too many ghost-/horror movies? Are you sure? R e a l l y?

Well then, let's see! Washington and Virginia Otis have quite different expectations when they come to stay at Canterville Hall, an old building their mother has bought from Lord Canterville, an aristocrat who lost his family's fortune and can no longer afford to run the house.

Washington is always playing violent video games and watching horror films – anything else, he thinks, is boring. Virginia, on the other hand, likes the countryside and appreciates history. Both meet Sir Simon, the resident ghost. A very jealous man, he killed his wife who, as she lay dying, cast a spell on him. So now his soul is trapped in the old building and he is haunting Canterville Hall. What would you do if you met a ghost who told you his life story and asked for your help?

Mrs Otis, an American no-nonsense business woman who wants to knock down the old house and build a modern housing estate, cannot see or hear the ghost. And yet it is through her that Virginia discovers the secret of the Canterville riddle – she finds the key to the locked room, the spell on Sir Simon is lifted, Lord Canterville discovers the family jewels and can buy back his family home from Mrs Otis.

And now, get ready for the tour of Canterville Hall – and please – let your imagination take over. See the old house and the paintings in the gallery, hear the creaks and noises, feel the atmosphere, notice the musty smell of old curtains and damp walls, the chill in the rooms … and who knows, maybe you come across a ghost who tells you his or her history! Enjoy the play and if you meet any ghosts, tell them hello from me!

Seeeeeeeee youuuuuuuuaaaaaaaaaahhhhhhhh!!

Helena Hirsch

Characters in the Play:

Sir Simon de Canterville / Lord Canterville

Washington Otis

Virginia (Ginny) Otis

Mrs Umney /Mrs Otis

The play will be performed by four actors.

Note to teachers:
When pre-reading the text (i.e. working through it before watching the performance) please bear in mind that students don't have to translate/look up every new/unknown word or phrase in order to understand the text. During the performance, through voice, action, movement and mime, there is no need to translate – students see, hear, feel – and understand.
There are some easy comprehension questions at the end of the text just to check overall understanding. More exploitation strategies, vocabulary work and various activities can be found in the extensive worksheet (available for download from www.schooltours.at as from September 2019).

SPOOKED![1]

by Sean Aita

Scene 1

Canterville Hall – morning.
Lord Canterville enters in a hurry. His pockets are stuffed with[2] letters.

LORD CANTERVILLE: Good morning! Good morning, everybody. How nice to see you all. You're all here for the tour of the house, are you? Good, splendid[3]. I'm so sorry I'm late. My housekeeper Mrs Umney and I have been very busy getting things ready for the new owners over the past few days. This house has been in my family for over 600 years, but sadly I will be the last Canterville to live here at Canterville Hall. I've been forced to sell it, I'm afraid. *(He pulls handfuls of letters from his pockets)*. Look! These are all bills. I'll just put them in here until I can afford to pay them. *(He opens a cupboard and a lot of letters fall out)*. Things have become so bad that I hate getting letters these days.

A postman enters holding a letter.

POSTMAN: Special delivery for Lord Canterville.

LORD CANTERVILLE: Never heard of him.

POSTMAN: Oh! Right. Thank you.

The postman leaves.

LORD CANTERVILLE: Anyway, I'm sure you don't want to hear about my troubles. You've paid for your visit, so let's get on with the tour.

The postman comes back.

POSTMAN: This is Canterville Hall?

LORD CANTERVILLE: No, no. Canterville Hall is miles away from here, miles away.

Lord Canterville leads the postman out again.

LORD CANTERVILLE: Sorry about that. This is the great hall, and over here you see the …

The postman returns again.

POSTMAN: It says 'Welcome to Canterville Hall' on the notice outside the front door.

LORD CANTERVILLE: It's a very old notice. Good day.

He pushes the postman out again.

LORD CANTERVILLE: Now hopefully we won't have any more interruptions. As I was saying ...

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[1] … einen Schrecken einjagen …
[2] vollgestopft sein mit …
[3] großartig, wunderbar

A very old and very grumpy-looking[1] woman enters.
LORD CANTERVILLE: Mrs Umney!
Mrs Umney uses as few words as possible. She just makes a disapproving[2] noise which sounds like - humph!
MRS UMNEY: Humph!
LORD CANTERVILLE: *(to audience)* This is my housekeeper, Mrs Umney. Say hello to our visitors, Mrs Umney.
MRS UMNEY: Humph!
LORD CANTERVILLE: What is it, Mrs Umney?
MRS UMNEY: Americans!
LORD CANTERVILLE: Already?
MRS UMNEY: Humph!
LORD CANTERVILLE: Ask them to wait in the drawing room[3] until I've finished the tour.
MRS UMNEY: Humph!
LORD CANTERVILLE: It seems the Otis family, the Americans who have bought Canterville Hall, have arrived already so we'll have to be quick. Now, if you will follow me up the main staircase to the picture gallery, I can introduce you to some of my relatives.
He mimes walking upstairs. Actors enter with picture frames.
LORD CANTERVILLE: Here we have a portrait of Sir Cecil the Stupid, one of the most foolish Cantervilles in history. He thought he was a dog, and spent all day making his servants throw sticks for him so that he could fetch them. This is Lady Audrey Canterville. She spent most of her fortune on Opera lessons and once hired the whole of Covent Garden Opera House for a month so that she could sing in public… It's a pity she was tone-deaf[4]. This is one of my favourite pictures. Lady Bella de Canterville was one of the most beautiful women in Britain in her day. She was married five times – unfortunately she didn't bother getting divorced[5] in between husbands. Then we have Sir Donald McCanterville of the Scottish branch of the family who died tripping over a set of bagpipes[6] and falling downstairs, and finally Dame Doris Canterville who looks lovely, but was a gambler and a thief.
Dame Doris picks Lord Canterville's pocket and waves his handkerchief.

[1] mürrisch dreinschauen (‚grantig')
[2] ablehnend, missbilligend
[3] Salon
[4] völlig unmusikalisch
[5] sich (zwischendurch) scheiden lassen
[6] Dudelsack

LORD CANTERVILLE: As you can see, most of the Canterville family are either foolish, eccentric or wicked[1]. Perhaps we deserve to lose Canterville Hall and let someone new take over.
ALL OF THE PORTRAITS: No!!!!
LORD CANTERVILLE: I sometimes feel that if these portraits could speak they would be very angry with me for selling our family home.
PORTRAITS: Idiot! Twit![2] L – Loser!
LORD CANTERVILLE: Oh well. Let's go back down again. This time we'll use the spiral staircase[3] *(mimes it)*, past the squeaky stair *(there is a squeak)*, and back to the ground floor once again.
A smartly dressed businesswoman in sunglasses enters, holding a mobile phone (Mrs Otis).
MRS OTIS: *(into phone)* No, tell them unless they can make it two million I'm not interested.
LORD CANTERVILLE: Oh! How do you do. You must be ...
MRS OTIS: Ok. I'll speak to you tomorrow. *(To Lord Canterville)* Sorry, Lucretia Otis. *(She shakes hands).*
LORD CANTERVILLE: James Canterville.
MRS OTIS: You're Lord Canterville?
LORD CANTERVILLE: I am.
MRS OTIS: I expected someone older.
LORD CANTERVILLE: I inherited[4] the title when I was in my twenties. Is that a problem?
MRS OTIS: I guess not.
LORD CANTERVILLE: Are the rest of your family still in the drawing room?
MRS OTIS: Yes. There was no signal there, so … *(She holds up her phone.)*
LORD CANTERVILLE: What do you think of the house?
MRS OTIS: It's like being in an episode of Downton Abbey[5].
LORD CANTERVILLE: Yes. I suppose it is a little. I'm glad I have a chance to talk to you before the others arrive as there is something important I need to tell you about the house …
An American teenager (Washington) enters. He is playing a video game. He does not see Lord Canterville.
WASHINGTON: Why is there no wi-fi in this dump[6]?
MRS OTIS: Washington, this is Lord Canterville. Lord Canterville, my son Washington.

[1] lächerlich, exzentrisch oder böse
[2] Trottel
[3] Wendeltreppe
[4] (den Titel) erben
[5] … eine Folge von Downton Abbey (britische TV-Serie über eine Adelsfamilie)
[6] Warum gibt es in diesem Loch kein w-lan?

LORD CANTERVILLE: Pleased to meet you.
Holds out his hand to shake.
WASHINGTON: *(slaps his hand)* Wassup[1]!
MRS OTIS: Washington! What will Lord Canterville think of us?
Washington returns to playing his computer game, Lord Canterville raises an eyebrow. A young girl enters (Virginia Otis).
MRS OTIS: My daughter Virginia. Virginia, this is Lord Canterville.
VIRGINIA: You're a Lord?
LORD CANTERVILLE: I am.
Virginia curtseys[2].
MRS OTIS: From one extreme to the other! Really, Virginia.
LORD CANTERVILLE: You don't have to curtsey, my dear.
VIRGINIA: Well, I never met a real-live English lord before. Is that your coat of arms[3] over the fireplace?
LORD CANTERVILLE: That's right.
VIRIGINA: It's wonderful to be surrounded by history like this.
LORD CANTERVILLE: I'm glad you think so.
VIRGINIA: Where we come from almost everything is new.
MRS OTIS: That's not exactly true, honey. The mountains and rivers in the States are the same age as the ones over here.
VIRGINIA: You know what I mean. *(To Lord Canterville)* Will it be hard for you to leave?
LORD CANTERVILLE: It will. Yes.
He looks for his handkerchief but cannot find it.
VIRGINIA: Don't worry. We'll take good care of the house for you.
LORD CANTERVILLE: Thank you. That makes me feel a great deal[4] better.
MRS OTIS: Just a second. Virginia, do you never listen to a word I say?
VIRGINIA: What do you mean?
MRS OTIS: Washington!
Washington looks up from his video game.
WASHINGTON: Wassup?
MRS OTIS: What is going to happen to Canterville Hall?
WASHINGTON: *(making a gesture with his hands)* Splat[5]!
MRS OTIS: Exactly.
VIRGINIA: No!
LORD CANTERVILLE: I don't understand what you mean.
VIRGINIA: It's going to be demolished. Mom, how could you?

[1] Was gibt's? (What's up?)
[2] knicksen, einen Knicks machen
[3] (Familien)wappen
[4] viel
[5] Klatsch!

LORD CANTERVILLE: Demolished!!
MRS OTIS: We are going to build an estate of houses[1] here, Lord Canterville. Didn't your lawyer tell you?
LORD CANTERVILLE: Houses?
MRS OTIS: Yes. A high-class development of ten eco-properties with every modern convenience[2].
LORD CANTERVILLE: But you can't … I won't let you …
MRS OTIS: I'm afraid it's too late for all that. The deeds[3] are signed. Canterville Hall belongs to the Otis Property Group Plc and we can do whatever we like with it.
LORD CANTERVILLE: Oh my goodness!!
He feels faint and has to sit down.
VIRGINIA: Are you ok, Lord Canterville?
LORD CANTERVILLE: Yes, I think so. But Mrs Otis …
MRS OTIS: Call me Lucretia, please.
LORD CANTERVILLE: Lucretia. Why are you doing this? Give me one good reason why you want to knock down Canterville Hall.
MRS OTIS: I'll give you two very good reasons: money and jobs. How many people are there around here who don't have any work?
LORD CANTERVILLE: Um. I'm not sure.
MRS OTIS: I'll tell you, then. Too many. The estate will be great for the local economy.
VIRGINIA: But why knock the house down, mom?
WASHINGTON: Yeah. Why?
They all look at him in surprise.
MRS OTIS: Washington?
LORD CANTERVILLE: I'm glad to see that you agree with me too, Washington.
WASHINGTON: You can tear out all this old stuff inside, and make the whole place into condos[4].
VIRGINIA: No!
MRS OTIS: That's my boy. The place is falling apart. The roof has to be replaced.
LORD CANTERVILLE: I was going to do that next year.
MRS OTIS: And there's dry rot[5] everywhere. It's much cheaper to bulldoze it.
WASHINGTON: Awesome. Can I drive the bulldozer?
MRS OTIS: If you want to, sweetheart.
VIRGINIA: The trouble with you two is, that all you care about is money.

[1] Wohnhaussiedlung, -komplex
[2] 10 noble Öko-Immobilien mit allen Annehmlichkeiten.
[3] Verträge, Urkunden
[4] das ganze alte Zeug rausreißen und Eigentumswohnungen daraus machen
[5] Das ganze Holz ist vom Hausschwamm befallen (Braunfäule).

There's more to life than money, you know.
LORD CANTERVILLE: I agree, Miss Virginia. Oscar Wilde put it very well. I'm sorry to say that you know the price of everything, and the value of nothing[1].
MRS OTIS: Excuse me Lord Canterville, but if you had paid more attention to the price of things, you wouldn't be in this mess right now. And you, Virginia – I didn't notice you complaining when I gave you your first credit card. Money does not grow on trees. You have to earn it. Now, if you don't mind I need to freshen up before lunch.
LORD CANTERVILLE: Yes, of course. I beg your pardon. It's all rather a shock, that's all. Here are the keys to the house. They're all labelled. I'm afraid there's one room next to the attic that you can't get into. The key has been missing for years.
WASHINGTON: Can I kick the door down, mom?
LORD CANTERVILLE: That won't be possible.
WASHINGTON: Why not? It's our house, isn't it?
LORD CANTERVILLE: It is. But the door is reinforced with iron bars[2].
WASHINGTON: Oh!
LORD CANTERVILLE: Um. There is one more thing before I go.
MRS OTIS: Yes?
LORD CANTERVILLE: Nobody, other than a member of the Canterville family, has ever been able to stay in this house for longer than one week.
MRS OTIS: *(shivering)* Because of the lousy central heating?
LORD CANTERVILLE: No ... I wasn't going to say this in front of the young people as I didn't want to scare them.
MRS OTIS: Scare them?
WASHINGTON: I've seen every horror film you can name – most of them in 3D. Please, please, try to scare me!
VIRGINIA: What is it?
LORD CANTERVILLE: This house is haunted[3].
VIRGINIA: I knew there was something special about this house.
WASHINGTON: What is it? Poltergeist? Headless horseman? Demon baby? Screaming skull?
LORD CANTERVILLE: No, nothing like that.
WASHINGTON: Blood-sucking vampire? Killer clown?
LORD CANTERVILLE: It's the spirit of one of my ancestors[4], Sir Simon de Canterville. He appears in the house every night on the stroke of midnight[5].

[1] … (jemand), der von allem den Preis kennt, aber nicht den Wert.
[2] Die Tür ist mit Eisenbalken verstärkt.
[3] In diesem Haus spukt es.
[4] einer meiner Vorfahren
[5] wenn die Uhr 12:00 schlägt, Schlag Mitternacht

WASHINGTON: Some old dead dude[1]?
LORD CANTERVILLE: I suppose so, yes.
WASHINGTON: *(returning to his computer game)* That is so lame[2].
VIRGINIA: Tell us about him, please, Lord Canterville.
LORD CANTERVILLE: Mrs Otis?
MRS OTIS: Sure. If she wants to hear about it, go ahead.
She is about to leave.
LORD CANTERVILLE: You aren't interested?
MRS OTIS: I don't believe in ghosts, Lord Canterville.
LORD CANTERVILLE: How do you explain this then?
He points at the floor.
MRS OTIS: The floorboards?
LORD CANTERVILLE: No. This.
MRS OTIS: What is that? Tomato ketchup?
LORD CANTERVILLE: It's blood.
WASHINGTON: Blood? Cool.
LORD CANTERVILLE: It is the bloodstain[3] where Sir Simon de Canterville's wife died – when he murdered her.
WASHINGTON: Was he like a serial killer[4]?
LORD CANTERVILLE: No. He just murdered his wife.
WASHINGTON: Told you he was lame.
MRS OTIS: Washington!
LORD CANTERVILLE: The stain can never be removed. Wash it away and it returns the next day.
WASHINGTON: *(mocking)* Whoeee! A magic bloodstain. I am crapping myself[5].
VIRGINIA: Shut up, Washington.
LORD CANTERVILLE: The red of the blood is supposed to be the same shade as the rubies in the necklace[6] his wife was wearing when she died.
VIRGINIA: I hope the ghost is real. I've always wanted to meet one.
LORD CANTERVILLE: Well, my dear. If you stay in this house for any length of time, sooner or later, you will see a hideous, ghastly, horrifying apparition[7] …
WASHINGTON: Called Mrs Umney.
MRS OTIS: Washington!
She chases him out. Music.

[1] irgend ein alter, toter Typ
[2] schwach (wenig überzeugend)
[3] Blutfleck
[4] Serienmörder
[5] Ich mach' mir in die Hose!
[6] Das Rot des Blutes hat angeblich denselben Farbton wie die Rubine der Halskette …
[7] … eine grauenhafte, gräßliche, furchtbare Erscheinung

Scene 2

Later that afternoon.

Virginia enters carrying a bunch of wild flowers. Mrs Otis comes in. She is drying her hair with a towel.

MRS OTIS: This place is huge and the bathroom was freezing. What have you been doing?

VIRGINIA: Looking around. Smell these flowers, mom. The grounds are really beautiful. Hey, what do you think the deal is with the locked room[1] next to the attic?

MRS OTIS: What do you mean?

VIRGINIA: Kind of mysterious, don't you think? A secret locked room?

MRS OTIS: If you say so, honey.

VIRGINIA: Doesn't any of it matter to you?

MRS OTIS: Any of what?

VIRGINIA: *(points at the house)* This!

MRS OTIS: Virginia, sweetheart, you can't afford to be sentimental in business[2].

VIRGINIA: But what about beauty? What about history? Don't any of those things matter to you?

MRS OTIS: Sure. Of course they do. The thing is, honey, that we need this deal to go through. Since your dad died, running things alone hasn't been easy. It's hard for a woman to succeed in this business. I just need you to understand how important this is for all of us. Building this estate will make us financially secure[3].

VIRGINIA: *(after a pause)* I'm sorry, mom, I didn't realise.

She embraces her.

MRS OTIS: Why should you? It's my job to provide for this family[4], not yours.

VIRGINIA: Mom?

MRS OTIS: What is it?

VIRGINIA: Do you think Lord Canterville was right? Is it really possible that there is a ghost here?

MRS OTIS: You know I don't believe in any of that nonsense.

VIRGINIA: If there is, I don't think the ghost would be very happy about our plans for his home.

MRS OTIS: He can always haunt one of the new houses on the estate.

There is a loud clap of thunder[5]. They both jump.

VIRGINIA: I think he heard you!

[1] … was meinst du, was es mit dem versperrten Zimmer auf sich hat …
[2] Sentimentalität hat im Geschäftsleben keinen Platz.
[3] finanziell abgesichert
[4] … für die Familie (Unterhalt) sorgen
[5] Donnerschlag

MRS OTIS: It's just a summer storm. Come on. Let's see if we can find the kitchen. I want to see what Mrs Umney is planning for dinner this evening.

There is another clap of thunder.

Scene 3

Attic Room – that evening.

Music builds; there is another clap of thunder and the clock strikes twelve. There is the sound of moaning, an 'ah' sound which grows louder and louder. The ghost enters (Sir Simon). He is dressed in Georgian costume, which is covered in cobwebs and dust, and he is wearing a powdered wig[1].

SIR SIMON: Ah...ah...ah… *(he sneezes)* Atishoo! Oh dear, oh dear. I have such a terrible cold. *(He blows his nose.)* Yes, I know what you're thinking, how can someone who has been dead for over two-hundred-and-fifty years have a cold? Well, I don't know. All I know is that my nose is running, my head aches, and I feel awful. It's very chilly haunting the corridors of this house at night. The central heating is completely useless and the windows don't fit properly. My great-great-great-great-great-grandson, or whatever he is, has let the place go to rack and ruin[2]. Even so, I can't believe he actually sold it. That American family are going to regret the day they set foot in Canterville Hall, or my name isn't Sir Simon de Canterville. I'll get that brat of a boy first[3]. I heard him mocking me. I can't wait to wipe that stupid grin off his face. I'll send a shiver down his spine that will make him tingle for a week.

He exits laughing.

Scene 4

Washington's room - the same evening.

Washington is playing a video game. The sound is very loud. There is a large trunk[4] against one wall.

WASHINGTON: Come on! Come on! Yes! Die, you mutant scum[5]! Die! 500 points. Now pick up the money ... get on the motorbike ... Are those special-forces? More aliens!! Where's my uzi[6]?

[1] Im Stil der Georgian era (1714 to 1830) gekleidet, mit (weiß) gepuderter Perücke
[2] verfallen, verkommen lassen
[3] Zuerst knöpfe ich mir halbstarken Burschen vor.
[4] Truhe, Koffer
[5] Stirb, du mieser Mutant (scum = Abschaum, Gesindel)
[6] Maschinenpistole

MRS OTIS: *(voice off)* Honey!
WASHINGTON: Oh man! Out of ammo[1]? How can that be? OK, kick-start the bike ... NO! Not out of gas, too?! Ok, Ok, let me think ... grenade launcher[2]!
MRS OTIS: *(enters the room)* Washington, it's late. You need to get some sleep.
WASHINGTON: Just five more minutes, Mom. I'm right in the middle of a dangerous alien attack.
MRS OTIS: Now!
WASHINGTON: Ok, ok, just let me use this flame thrower.
Mrs Otis looks over his shoulder at the screen.
MRS OTIS: Oooh! Yuck. What are those things?
WASHINGTON: Mutant Lobster[3] people. Hold on. I'll just fry them.
MRS OTIS: *(horrified)* Oh!
Washington turns off the game.
WASHINGTON: Done and dusted[4].
MRS OTIS: Are you sure that game won't give you nightmares?
WASHINGTON: No way.
MRS OTIS: Why are all these games so violent?
WASHINGTON: That one isn't violent.
MRS OTIS: You just set fire to half a dozen lobster people things.
WASHINGTON: Mmm. Crispy fried prawn[5].
MRS OTIS: Well, I just hope these games aren't having a bad effect on you. You read about all sorts of terrible things in the newspapers.
WASHINGTON: Don't worry, mom. If Earth gets invaded by giant mutant lobsters, I promise not to set fire to them. Ok?
MRS OTIS: I'm serious. It worries me. Some of these so-called games are really sick.
WASHINGTON: I'm smart enough to know the difference between a game and real life, mom.
MRS OTIS: I guess so. Ok, honey. Sleep tight.
She kisses him.
WASHINGTON: *(lying down)* Night, mom.
MRS OTIS: Night.
She leaves the room. Washington immediately sits up and grabs his tablet again.
WASHINGTON: Just another half an hour or so ... But first ... stealth mode[6].
He takes some earphones out of his pocket, plugs them in and continues playing the game in silence. There is a creaking sound. The lid of the trunk[7] opens and Sir Simon de Canterville appears from inside it.

[1] Keine Munition mehr? (*ammunition*)
[2] Granatenwerfer
[3] Hummer-Mutanten
[4] erfolgreich abgeschlossen (sl.)
[5] knusprig gebratene Garnelen
[6] Geheim-Modus
[7] Truhendeckel

SIR SIMON: *(standing in the trunk)* Right. Here goes. Stand by to be terrified, you colonial nincompoop[1]!
He waves his hands, there is a clap of thunder, he gives a wicked laugh. Washington doesn't notice him.
SIR SIMON: Oh, for goodness sake!
He waves his arms again, there is another clap of thunder. Washington looks up and sees Sir Simon.
WASHINGTON: Hey, you freaky creep[2], what are you doing in that trunk? And why the hell are you dressed like Mozart?
SIR SIMON: *(pointing at Washington)* Leave this house!
He lifts his arms up. There is a huge clap of thunder.
WASHINGTON: Nice effect. Dramatic. Is that Dolby stereo?
SIR SIMON: *(Trying again, using a ghostly voice*) LEAVE THIS HOUSE!
WASHINGTON: I-phone voice changer app[3]. I've got one too, Amadeus. *(He speaks in a funny voice)* So how much did she pay you?
SIR SIMON: What?
WASHINGTON: My sister. How much did she pay you?
SIR SIMON: What do you mean?
WASHINGTON: It's so obvious this is a set-up[4]. That is the worst fancy dress costume I've ever seen. And that silly wig. Didn't they even have a decent mask? The one you've got makes you look ridiculous.
SIR SIMON: *(very offended)* I'm not wearing a mask!
WASHINGTON: Oh! My mistake. Anyway, just run along and tell her it didn't work. *(He laughs.)* You must've been hiding in that trunk for hours, man, that is so lame.
SIR SIMON: I haven't been waiting in this trunk. I chose to materialise here[5], that's all.
WASHINGTON: Sure, yeah. I forgot. Because you're a scary ghostie. Please! Who are you anyway? The butler?
SIR SIMON: The butler?! I've never been so insulted[6] in my whole life. I am Sir Simon de Canterville and you are an ignoramus[7]! You haven't heard the last of this!
He gets back into the trunk and closes the lid.
WASHINGTON: You can't stay in that trunk forever, you know, and I'm not going to sleep with some creepy weirdo[8] in my room. I'll count to three, then I'm

[1] Gleich wirst du vor Angst schlottern, du kolonialer Idiot (Amerika war damals brit. Kolonie)
[2] … du ausgeflippter widerlicher Typ …
[3] … I-phone App, die Stimmen verändert
[4] Es ist doch total offensichtlich, dass das inszeniert ist.
[5] … ich habe eben beschlossen, hier zu erscheinen …
[6] beleidigt
[7] Ignorant, Unwissender
[8] … mit einem unheimlichen Spinner in meinem Zimmer …

going to pull you out of there by your wig and kick your ass. One, two, three.
He opens the trunk. It is empty. He tips it up[1], there is nobody inside.
WASHINGTON: That is one really neat trick. He's disappeared completely. That dude must be a fan of David Blaine[2]. Now, how did he do it? Nothing under here, no levers[3]. Nothing at all. I don't get it. He couldn't really be...? No. that's crazy. It must be a trick. *(Calls)* Come on, you can come out now! *(Silence)* I don't know though ... could he really be ...? What the heck, I feel like a complete idiot but ... *(calls out again)* Hey, ghost ... Mr Ghost-dude? I'm sorry I didn't believe you. Yo, Sir Stephen!
Sir Simon appears on the other side of the room.
SIR SIMON: Sir Simon!
WASHINGTON: Woah! Sir Simon. Sorry. Wait a minute. You're not a hologram, are you? Because if you are, then my sister has totally foxed me[4].
SIR SIMON: Of course I'm not hollow. I'm not even see-through.
WASHINGTON: But you are a 100-percent-genuine spook?
SIR SIMON: We prefer the term departed spirit[5]. But yes, I am. *(He bows.)*
WASHINGTON: Awesome. *(He points his tablet at Sir Simon.)* Get ready to become an internet sensation. Damn it! You don't show up on screen.
SIR SIMON: May I ask you a question?
WASHINGTON: Fire away.
SIR SIMON: Why aren't you frightened of me?
WASHINGTON: Have you seen "Hereditory" or "Insidious"?
SIR SIMON: No. What are they?
WASHINGTON: Movies.
SIR SIMON: Movies?
WASHINGTON: Look, there's a trailer right here on YouTube. Let's try this ... "Scream 2".
He shows the screen of his tablet to Sir Simon. They watch together for a few moments. The music from the soundtrack plays. There is a shocking moment. Sir Simon jumps and screams.
WASHINGTON: You see? Now that's scary. Or there's this Japanese girl in "The Grudge" who crawls about like this ... *(He imitates a moment from the film).*
SIR SIMON: Stop it! That's horrible!
WASHINGTON: Exactly. If you want to scare people in this day and age you're going to have to up your game[6]. I've got a great idea. I'll show you how to do it. We can totally scare Ginny witless. It will be a blast[7].

[1] kippen
[2] ein amerikanischer Aktions- und Zauberkünstler bzw. Illusionist
[3] … nichts darunter, keine Hebel …
[4] (meine Schwester hat mich echt) verwirrt, getäuscht
[5] Wir ziehen die Bezeichnung ‚verstorbene Seelen' vor.
[6] … müssen Sie sich schon etwas Besseres/Wirkungsvolleres einfallen lassen
[7] Das wird supercool (ein Hit)!

SIR SIMON: Ginny?
WASHINGTON: My sister Virginia. I don't know why I didn't think of it right away. She said she wanted to meet you.
SIR SIMON: Did she?
WASHINGTON: Come on. Her room is just along the hall. I've got some gear I bought for Halloween[1] I've been wanting to try out.
They exit.

Scene 5
Virginia's room – later the same night.
Virginia enters wearing a bathrobe. She is searching the web on her tablet computer.

VIRGINIA: *(reading)* Summoning spells for calling a spirit[2]: draw a circle with chalk on the ground. *(She does so.)* Stand in the centre of the circle and spin once anti-clockwise. Now chant the following phrase three times - Oh spirit of the dead, approach and be seen; Oh spirit of the dead, approach and be seen; Oh spirit of the dead, approach and be seen ...
She waits a moment. Nothing happens.
VIRGINIA: There is so much rubbish on the internet.
She leaves the circle and sits on the bed. A terrifying masked figure suddenly jumps out at her. Virginia screams hysterically. The attacker chases her around the room. Virginia reaches under the bed and pulls out a baseball bat. She then turns on her attacker and swings it at his head.
WASHINGTON: *(trying to remove his mask)* Woah! Ginny, hold up! It's me, Washington.
Virginia continues following him around the room, trying to hit him with the bat.
VIRGINIA: I'm going to kill you, you little jerk[3].
WASHINGTON: Hold up! Hold up! Ginny. It was just a joke!
VIRGINIA: *(swinging bat)* How funny is this?
WASHINGTON: You wanted to meet a real ghost. Now is your chance. He's here.
VIRGINIA: *(sarcastic)* Oh, really? Where?
Washington steps to one side revealing[4] Sir Simon.
SIR SIMON: Right here, my dear.
VIRGINIA: Oh my goodness!
Virginia stumbles as if she is slightly dizzy. Mrs Otis enters. She is holding a

[1] Ich hab so Zeugs für Halloween gekauft (gear = Ausrüstung, Montur)
[2] Zaubersprüche, um Geister erscheinen zu lassen
[3] … du kleiner Trottel
[4] zeigen, erkennen lassen

SEASON 2019/20

VIENNA'S English THEATRE
SINCE 1963

13 Sept – 19 Oct 2019

THE CHILDREN by Lucy Kirkwood

In a remote cottage on the British East coast, Hazel and Robin, a couple of retired nuclear engineers, are living a seemingly cosy life, whilst the outside world is in chaos following a devastating series of events. When Rose, an old friend, suddenly turns up at their door after decades of absence, her motives are unclear at first. What begins as intimate but slightly tense banter, soon turns into a gripping and fierce conflict, when Rose makes an unexpected proposal that raises the stakes. Robin and Hazel's protected existence is disrupted as they are forced to consider their responsibility for the next generation.

4 Nov – 21 Dec 2019

THE MOUSETRAP by Agatha Christie

Agatha Christie's legendary 'whodunit' THE MOUSETRAP is the world's longest running play. A group of strangers is stranded in a remote country house cut off from the outside world by a blizzard, when they discover that there is a murderer in their midst. Each one of the mysterious guests seems to be harbouring a secret. Into their midst comes a policeman, travelling on skis. To get to the rationale of the murderer's pattern, the Detective Sergeant probes into the background of everyone present, until at the last, nerve-shredding moment the murderer's identity and motive are finally revealed.

17 Jan – 22 Feb 2020

A REGULAR LITTLE HOUDINI

Written and performed by Daniel Llewelyn-Williams

This magical one-man show is set in Wales at the turn of the last century and tells the touching coming of age story of Alan, a dockworker's son. The boy dreams of a career as a magician, of emulating his hero, Harry Houdini's death defying stunts. With a head full of magic, Alan witnesses one of the most terrifying events of British industrial history, as his personal journey collides with the great Houdini himself.

9 March – 18 April 2020

NEXT TO NORMAL

Music by Tom Kitt, Book and Lyrics by Brian Yorkey

Winner of 3 Tony Awards and the Pulitzer Prize for best Drama

The Musical NEXT TO NORMAL tells the story of Diana Goodman and her family; on the outside they appear to be a typical American family and yet their lives are anything but normal. Diana has been battling her own demons for years, which is affecting everyone in her life. As the mystery of what is triggering her instability is slowly unravelled the audience is taken on a heart wrenching journey into the power of memory and the fragility of the mind.

VIENNA'S English THEATRE
SINCE 1963

V.E.T. SPECIAL

22 – 25 April 2020

THE ENGLISH LOVERS present

Expect the Unexpected!

More frolicsome fun with the English Lovers! The players and musicians come to the stage with no idea of what they're about to play. It's up to the audience to supply them with the impulses that will inspire each improvised scene. There'll be fun and games galore in this evening of extraordinary and extraneous storytelling, not to mention song and dance, so buckle up for the ride of your life!

28 & 29 April 2020

En español

Grupo de Teatro Soles del Sur
de la Asociación Española en Austria

For the first time in the history of Vienna's English Theatre, we are proud to present a guest production in Spanish.

7 – 9 May 2020

Vienna's English Theatre Academy presents

VETA CLASS OF 2020 FINAL SHOW

VETA's drama students present a professional full-scale theatre production as highlight of their two-year training.

25 May – 4 July 2020

William Shakespeare's A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

Shakespeare's most popular comedy continues to cast its irresistible spell over the centuries. Be enchanted by this magical tale of order and chaos, love and fantasy, all accompanied by live music.

On a Midsummer's night, four young lovers take refuge in the woods. Hermia is to be married to Demetrius, but she loves Lysander so they decide to runaway to marry in secret but are hotly pursued by Demetrius, himself followed by Helena, who is desperately in love with him. Unknowingly they find themselves wrapped in the dream-like arms of an enchanted forest where sprites lurk and fairies rule. Whilst a feuding Fairy King and Queen are at war, their paths are crossed by Bottom, Quince and friends rehearsing a play. Mischief-maker Puck is creating havoc to ensure that the course of true love is anything but smooth, and merry chaos ensues.

heavy candlestick[1] as a weapon. She does not see Sir Simon. She reacts to Washington in the mask and tries to hit him.
MRS OTIS: Get away from my daughter, you psychopath!
WASHINGTON: Mom, it's me!
MRS OTIS: Washington!?
MRS OTIS: What in Heaven's name are you wearing?
WASHINGTON: It's a Halloween mask. It was just a joke, Mom.
MRS OTIS: Well, it isn't one that I find at all amusing. You can tell me all the details in the morning. Go to your room right away.
WASHINGTON: Hold on, Mom. What about the ghost?
He points at Sir Simon. Mrs Otis looks directly at the ghost, but does not see him.
MRS OTIS: What ghost?
WASHINGTON: That ghost right there!
Virginia looks puzzled by the fact that her mother cannot see the ghost.
MRS OTIS: Is this another one of your jokes, Washington, because if it is ...
WASHINGTON: Ginny. Back me up[2]. Tell mom that Sir Simon de Canterville is right here in this room with us.
VIRGINIA: *(deliberately pretending[3] not to see Sir Simon)* Yeah. Very funny, Washington. I'm not joining in your stupid game.
Washington sticks his tongue out at his sister.
WASHINGTON: Sir Simon, say something to my mother.
Sir Simon crosses to Mrs Otis.
SIR SIMON: LEAVE THIS HOUSE!
WASHINGTON: See, you must have heard that!
MRS OTIS: Washington ... bed. Now!
SIR SIMON: *(beginning to enjoy himself)* You old battleaxe[4]!
Virginia is shocked but keeps quiet.
WASHINGTON: *(to ghost)* Shut up!
MRS OTIS: Washington! How dare you[5] tell me to shut up!
WASHINGTON: I didn't.
MRS OTIS: You did. I just heard you.
Sir Simon sticks his tongue out at Mrs Otis.
WASHINGTON: *(to ghost)* Stop being so rude.
MRS OTIS: Me! You're the one who's being rude.
WASHINGTON: Not you. I was talking to him.
SIR SIMON: *(to Washington)* You really are an idiot!

[1] Kerzenleuchter
[2] Hilf mir!
[3] … absichtlich so tun, als ob …
[4] Sie alter Drachen!
[5] Du wagst es …, wie kannst du es wagen …

WASHINGTON: *(to ghost)* You arrogant git[1]! I don't care if you are three-hundred years old, I'm going to kick your ass for you.
MRS OTIS: *(shouting)* THAT IS ENOUGH! I knew those computer games were a bad influence. I want that computer first thing tomorrow morning. You're banned from playing any games at all for a month[2].
WASHINGTON: But – mom!
MRS OTIS: Not another word, Mister. To your room – this minute!
Washington leaves angrily.
MRS OTIS: That boy is in a whole heap of trouble. Now, Virginia, are you sure you're all right, honey? When I heard you screaming I was terrified.
VIRGINIA: Yeah. I'm sure. Thanks, mom. I just had a bit of a shock, that's all.
Her mother kisses her and leaves the room. Sir Simon sneezes loudly.
VIRGINIA: Bless you!
SIR SIMON: Thank you. I don't think anyone needs blessing more than me.
VIRGINIA: I guess not. After all you did kill your wife, didn't you?
SIR SIMON: I'm afraid so. I'm sorry if I frightened you.
VIRGINIA: You didn't. I just felt really cold and dizzy when I saw you.
SIR SIMON: Ah yes. I have that effect on some people, the sensitive[3] ones ... not like your mother.
VIRGINIA: You should apologise for being so rude to her.
SIR SIMON: I don't see why. You should all apologise for wanting to tear down this house.
VIRGINIA: Oh, you know about that?
SIR SIMON: I'm dead, not deaf.
VIRGINIA: Then you know that I'm against the idea.
SIR SIMON: Yes. Thank you for that. If the house is destroyed then the only hope I have to escape this awful prison here on earth will be lost. I will be trapped forever[4].
VIRGINIA: But why? I don't understand.
SIR SIMON: The Canterville riddle[5].
VIRGINIA: What's that?
SIR SIMON: As my wife lay dying she cursed my mortal soul[6]. That is the reason I am still here in this house. But although she hated me when she died, she loved me, too. So she also cast a spell[7] which could release me. The secret is hidden in what we call the Canterville riddle. It is written above the fireplace in the great hall.

[1] Sie eingebildeter Idiot!
[2] Ein Monat Computerspiel-Verbot!
[3] empfindsam (empfänglich für etwas)
[4] Ich werde für immer hier gefangen sein.
[5] Das Canterville Rätsel (im Sinne von Geheimnis/Wortspiel)
[6] ... sie verfluchte meine (sterbliche) Seele
[7] … mit einem Zauber belegen, der mich befreien könnte

VIRGINIA: How could she do that? Curse you, cast a spell?
SIR SIMON: She was a special woman, my wife, magical. You remind me of her in some ways.
VIRGINIA: Then why did you kill her?
SIR SIMON: She drove me to it[1]. Wearing her prettiest clothes every day, showing herself off in public, smiling at other men.[2] I couldn't help myself.
VIRGINIA: But that's terrible. You killed her for something as trivial as that?
SIR SIMON: It wasn't my fault – not at all! Jealousy is a terrible thing. Terrible. I hope you never discover it for yourself. *(There is the sound of a cockerel crowing.)* Daylight is almost here. It is time that I was gone. Goodnight, my dear – or rather, good morning.
VIRGINIA: Good morning.
Sir Simon exits. Virginia watches him leave and then exits.

Scene 6

The Great Hall – the next morning.
A builder wearing a hard hat and high visibility jacket[3] enters with Mrs Otis.

MRS OTIS: So we're agreed, then. We need to get this place knocked down as quickly as possible. Then they won't be able to do a thing about it.
The builder nods and exits. Virginia enters.
MRS OTIS: Good morning, sleepyhead. It's past eleven.
VIRGINIA: Is Washington up yet?
MRS OTIS: Your brother's still in trouble for that nonsense last night. I think he's gone out for a walk.
VIRGINIA: A walk!!
MRS OTIS: I know! I couldn't believe it, either.
VIRGINIA: What was the builder doing here?
MRS OTIS: We have to bring the demolition forward[4]. That old busybody[5] Lord Canterville has been causing trouble in the village. The local council[6] might try to stop us. There's going to be a public meeting.
VIRGINIA: Sir Simon de Canterville?
MRS OTIS: No. Lord Canterville – the guy we met on the first day. Sir Simon's the dead one, isn't he? The one Washington pretended he could see in your bedroom.

[1] Sie hat mich dazu getrieben.
[2] … sich viel in der Öffentlichkeit zeigen, andere Männer anlächeln
[3] Helm und Sicherheitsweste
[4] Wir müssen den Abriss vorverlegen.
[5] Dieser alte Wichtigmacher …
[6] Gemeinderat

VIRGINIA: He did see him, mom ... *(Pause)* And so did I.
MRS OTIS: Don't be silly, Virginia. I'm not in the mood.
VIRGINIA: It's true, I saw him. He doesn't want you to knock the house down. It's really important that you don't or he could be trapped here on earth forever.
MRS OTIS: This isn't funny.
VIRGINIA: I have to solve the riddle.
MRS OTIS: What?
VIRGINIA: It's written on the wall above the fireplace.
MRS OTIS: Fine, go right ahead. You have until 9.00 am tomorrow. The men have to set dynamite around the house as soon as possible. Then this place will be a pile of rubble[1] and we can move into a nice, modern hotel.
She exits.
VIRGINIA: Oh no! I have to solve the riddle right away.
Virginia crosses to the fireplace. She looks at the words written above it.
Washington enters. He looks very depressed.
VIRGINIA: Washington! Thank goodness. You have to help me.
WASHINGTON: Why should I? I'm banned from playing video games because of you.
VIRGINIA: Don't be such a baby. It's for Sir Simon.
WASHINGTON: I don't care. That old ghost made me look like a complete idiot.
VIRGINIA: Come on, Washington. I'll make it up to you[2].
WASHINGTON: Yeah? How?
Virginia shows him her smartphone.
VIRGINIA: Half an hour of "Fortnite"?
WASHINGTON: *(he grabs for the phone)* Ok. What do I have to do?
VIRGINIA: *(holding the phone away from him)* Help me to translate this.
She points at the fireplace.
WASHINGTON: What is it?
VIRGINIA: It's a riddle.
WASHINGTON: Why do you need to translate it?
VIRGINIA: It's written in German.
WASHINGTON: Don't be silly. This is England. How can it be written in German?
VIRGINIA: When Sir Simon was alive the kings of England were German, the Hanovarians[3].
WASHINGTON: So everyone British spoke German?
VIRGINIA: No, of course not. But the Royal Family and some of the aristocracy did. I think Sir Simon's wife might have been German.
WASHINGTON: Um Himmels Willen!
VIRGINIA: This is what I need. You did German at school.

[1] ein Schutthaufen
[2] Ich mache es wieder gut (erkenntlich zeigen)
[3] siehe S. 13, FN 1; Haus Hannover (George I, II, III, IV)

WASHINGTON: A bit.
VIRGINIA: So what does this mean?
She points at the words above the fireplace.
WASHINGTON: *(looks at the words for a few moments)* No idea.
VIRGINIA: Washington!
WASHINGTON: I failed the class[1]!
VIRGINIA: Ok. No games then.
WASHINGTON: Hold on. Hold on. I'll get us some help. There's a group from a school in Austria on an exchange week[2] looking round the house this morning.
VIRGINIA: What?
WASHINGTON: Yeah. They booked ages ago, so I let them in. Let's go and find them.
He points to the audience. Washington and Virginia ask a group of students to come on stage to help them with the translation.
WASHINGTON: Can you help us, please? This is the riddle.
Wenn plötzlich sehend wird der Blinde,
Im verlor'nen Schild den Schlüssel finde,
Und die Wahrheit dich vom Fluch entbinde.
WASHINGTON: Can you help me with some of these words?
The pupils help him with the translation.
VIRGINIA: Thanks so much!
WASHINGTON: Yeah, thanks guys. *(He holds his hand out to Virginia)* "Fortnite" now!
She gives him her phone.
WASHINGTON: *(very excited)* Yes!
He begins playing. Mrs Otis re-enters, carrying some building plans. As she passes Washington she takes the phone out of his hands, and carries on out of the room.
VIRGINIA: Darn it[3]. I don't have a clue what this riddle means now that it is in English!
WASHINGTON: It means give up.
VIRGINIA: No. Never. I just need to speak to Sir Simon again tonight, that's all.
WASHINGTON: I'm going to take a look at the explosives[4]. It is going to be so awesome to see this place get blown sky-high.
He exits. Virginia sighs, then yawns.
VIRGINIA: If I'm going to stay up until midnight then I need to take a nap.
She exits.

[1] Da bin ich durchgefallen!
[2] Sprachwoche, Schüleraustausch
[3] elegantere Version von 'damn it'
[4] Ich schau mir mal die Sprengsätze an …

Scene 7
Later that night.
The clock strikes twelve. There is a clap of thunder and Sir Simon enters. Mrs Otis enters from the other side of the stage. She is wearing a dressing gown and carrying a mug of hot chocolate. She does not see Sir Simon. She stops for a second and looks at her mobile phone.

MRS OTIS: *(to herself)* If it's midnight here, then it's 8 a.m. in Los Angeles; too early to call the bank.
While she speaks Sir Simon creeps up behind her and blows on her hot chocolate. Mrs Otis takes a sip.
MRS OTIS: Yeuk! It's completely cold. The heating here is even worse than I thought.
She exits muttering. Virginia enters.
VIRGINIA: I saw that.
SIR SIMON: Sorry, I couldn't stop myself! Did you have any luck with the riddle?
VIRGINIA: Not really. I wanted to ask you about it.
SIR SIMON: There's no point. If I knew what it meant I wouldn't be here now.
VIRGINIA: But did you ever have a shield?
SIR SIMON: I'm afraid not. We used guns in my day. Shields aren't a lot of use against a rifle[1].
VIRGINIA: Did you know anyone blind?
SIR SIMON: Not literally.
VIRGINIA: What do you mean?
SIR SIMON: There are none so blind as those who will not see[2].
VIRGINIA: What does that mean?
SIR SIMON: People like your mother – people who are either too stupid or too involved with their own lives[3] to see what is right in front of their faces.
VIRGINIA: That's it!
SIR SIMON: It is?
VIRGINIA: If we can make my mother see you, then perhaps we will have solved part of the riddle.
SIR SIMON: I doubt it.
VIRGINIA: Wait there.
She exits. A pause.
SIR SIMON: This is all a complete waste of time.
Virginia returns with her mother.

[1] Schilde helfen nicht viel gegen ein (Jagd)Gewehr
[2] Zitat aus dem 16. Jhd (bzw. der Bibel)
[3] … zu beschäftigt mit ihren eigenen Problemen (um zu sehen, was um sie herum vorgeht)

MRS OTIS: When we get back to L.A., I'm taking you and your brother to see a really good psychotherapist.
VIRGINIA: *(She points her mother towards Sir Simon.)* Mom! Just look – carefully – right there. Tell me what you see.
MRS OTIS: What is all this about?
VIRGINIA: Please, just do as I ask you, mom, it's really important! Now, what can you see?
MRS OTIS: The wall?
VIRGINIA: Can't you see anything at all in front of the wall?
MRS OTIS: The curtains?
VIRGINIA: No! *(to Sir Simon)* Wave your arms around.
MRS OTIS: *(waving her arms)* I don't see how it will help.
VIRGINIA: *(to mother)* Not you! *(to Sir Simon)* You!
MRS OTIS: Who are you talking to, Virginia?
VIRGINIA: Sir Simon de Canterville. He's standing right in front of you.
MRS OTIS: Not this nonsense again!
VIRGINIA: Please, mom. You have to believe me. Please!
MRS OTIS: Oh, very well. If you insist on keeping this charade up[1], I suppose I can at least join in the game.
She puts her hand out to shake hands. Sir Simon is now behind her.
How do you do?
VIRGINIA: He's not there, mom.
MRS OTIS: I know he's not there. I'm just trying to humour you[2].
VIRGINIA: No, I mean, he's behind you.
Mrs Otis spins around.
MRS OTIS: Is he? Well, I must say it's not very polite to keep moving about.
Sir Simon moves to the other side of her again.
VIRGINIA: Say something.
MRS OTIS: I just did.
VIRGINIA: Sir Simon!
SIR SIMON: *(in a spooky voice)* LEAVE MY HOUSE!
VIRGINIA: Did you hear that?
MRS OTIS: Hear what?
SIR SIMON: This is a complete waste of time. Your mother has no imagination whatsoever. She'll never be able to see me.
VIRGINIA: There must be something we can do.
MRS OTIS: Give up this nonsense and go to bed?
SIR SIMON: Just face it, my dear. You have done your best, but your mother is definitely not the answer to the riddle. You should give up.
VIRGINIA: I won't! I'm not going to.

[1] … wenn du unbedingt mit diesem Unsinn weitermachen willst …
[2] Ich lasse dir nur deinen Willen (= dir zuliebe mitspielen)

MRS OTIS: But it's well past midnight.
Washington enters.
VIRGINIA: Washington! You have to help me.
WASHINGTON: Because?
VIRGINIA: Because you're my brother. *(She whispers to him)* And because I'll lend you my laptop.
WASHINGTON: Good call[1]. Wassup?
VIRGINIA: Sir Simon says, mom can't see him because she has no imagination.
MRS OTIS: I beg your pardon?!
VIRGINIA: Sorry, mom. But it's true. That's what he said.
MRS OTIS: *(in completely the wrong direction)* How dare you!
WASHINGTON: Go, mom!
MRS OTIS: I'm quite aware that this is all some complicated trick to make me look foolish. Am I going to end up on YouTube? Is that it? Do you have a hidden camera somewhere?
WASHINGTON: No ... Honest.
VIRGINIA: I'm sorry, but Sir Simon is not visible to you because you either can't, or won't see anything that you can't count, or make use of in some way.
MRS OTIS: Virginia, what a hurtful thing to say.
VIRGINIA: But you weren't always like this. I remember when you loved to make-believe[2], and when you were the most imaginative person in the whole family. Washington?
WASHINGTON: *(reluctantly[3])* She's right, mom. Remember how you used to make up stories for us every night when we went to bed?
VIRGINIA: It just needs something to bring it out again.
WASHINGTON: Watch this.
He pretends to bounce a ball on the floor[4]. He is playing an imaginary game of basketball.
SIR SIMON: What is he doing?
VIRGINIA: I'm not too sure.
WASHINGTON: Washington Otis, basketball champion of the world. *(To Mrs Otis)* You remember when I was little we used to play this game together all the time. Hey, mom! Catch!
He throws the imaginary ball to his mother who instinctively grabs it out of the air[5].
MRS OTIS: Oh!
SIR SIMON: Well caught, M'am!

[1] Kingt gut!
[2] … gerne Fantasiespiele spielen
[3] widerwillig (er gibt es nicht gerne zu)
[4] Er tut so, als ob er einen Ball auf dem Boden aufspringen lassen würde (dribbeln)
[5] … sie fängt ihn instinktiv aus der Luft auf

Mrs Otis turns around to face Sir Simon, she has obviously heard him. She screams in horror.
VIRGINIA: Mom, it's ok!
Mrs Otis runs off-stage.
WASHINGTON: What the heck? Where's she going?
VIRGINIA: The airport?
Mrs Otis returns, holding a sword in one hand and a shield in another.
MRS OTIS: Get away from my children, you gruesome fiend[1]!
Sir Simon looks at her in amazement.
WASHINGTON: *(taking the sword from her)* Thanks, mom, but the King-Arthur-look went out last season[2]. *(He tries a couple of moves.)* Nice blade.
VIRGINIA: You can see him!
MRS OTIS: Of course I can see him. I just wish I couldn't.
SIR SIMON: That shield. Where did you find it?
MRS OTIS: This? I have no idea. I just grabbed the first thing that came to hand[3].
SIR SIMON: That is the shield of Godefroy de Canterville, lost in battle some time in the early twelfth century.
VIRGINIA: How do you know?
SIR SIMON: I recognise his crest[4].
VIRGINIA: The shield that was lost! Mom! Can I see it please?
Mrs Otis passes her the shield. Virginia feels inside the rim of the shield and pulls out a small brass key.[5]
VIRGINIA: This must be the key.
SIR SIMON: But that's impossible.
VIRGINIA: What do you mean?
SIR SIMON: You are holding the key to the room where ...
VIRGINIA: Where what?
SIR SIMON: Where I am.
VIRGINIA: Where you are?
SIR SIMON: Wait! I can feel something. My spirit is being drawn there now[6], but first quickly – the last line of the riddle!
VIRGINIA: The truth will set you free.
SIR SIMON: I have denied it for so long, but the simple truth is that I am a foolish, jealous, stupid man. I killed my wife when she was blameless and faultless[7]. I am to blame, not her, and I beg her forgiveness now.
VIRGINIA: I'm sure you have it.

[1] … Sie grausiger Teufel
[2] … der König-Arthur-Look ist aus der Mode (nicht mehr in)
[3] … ich habe das Erstbeste genommen, das mir in die Hände gefallen ist
[4] Wappen
[5] … die Innenseite des Schildrandes abtasten und einen kleinen Messingschlüssel hervorholen
[6] … ich spüre, dass mein Geist jetzt dorthin (in das versperrte Zimmer) gezogen wird
[7] … sie war unschuldig und ohne Fehler

SIR SIMON: Thank you, my dear, you have taught me to trust again. I can leave this prison at last – it was one of my own making all along. Farewell. Lay my bones to rest under the old oak tree by the lake.
VIRIGNIA: But where will we find them?
SIR SIMON: The room next to the attic. You have the key.
Music as he exits. Virginia looks at the key in her hand and then exits. A cockerel crows[1] *to indicate that some time has passed and a new day has arrived.*

Scene 8
The next morning.
Washington enters. He is playing a computer game on his tablet. Virginia enters – she is holding a ruby necklace.

WASHINGTON: Is Lord Canterville still here?
VIRGINIA: He's talking to mom. It was so sweet of him to give me the necklace we found in the attic room.
WASHINGTON: It certainly was. Those look like real rubies, Ginny. They must be worth a fortune!
VIRGINIA: Are they? Wow!
WASHINGTON: Uh huh. I guess he was pleased you found the rest of the family jewels along with his ancestor's bones. He's rich again now.
Washington exits. Lord Canterville enters with Mrs Otis. They shake hands.
MRS OTIS: I'll speak to my lawyer as soon as possible.
LORD CANTERVILLE: Thank you, Mrs Otis. I can hardly believe the house is mine again. Thanks to your family, my ancestor's spirit has finally been laid to rest.
WASHINGTON: *(to Mrs Otis)* You sold the house back to him?
MRS OTIS: Yes, Washington. You can't stop progress[2] but it's important to pay attention to what's around us too. I think I may have forgotten that for a while.
VIRGINIA: So now you have a house without a ghost!
WASHINGTON: Better than a ghost without a house!
LORD CANTERVILLE: Very true, young Washington!
MRS OTIS: Are you happy now, Virginia?
VIRGINIA: I certainly am, Mom. I've met a real English lord, stayed in a real English country house and made friends with a real English ghost. Just wait till I tell my friends back in L.A.
WASHINGTON: Pity they won't believe a word of it.
VIRGINIA: Then I'll just have to write it all down, and turn it into a story.

[1] Ein Hahn kräht …
[2] Der Fortschritt lässt sich nicht aufhalten …

LORD CANTERVILLE: That sounds an interesting idea. What would you call it?
VIRGINIA: I don't know. How about "Spooked"?
There is a pause.
WASHINGTON: Naaah! That's a crap name!
VIRGINIA: Washington!
She chases Washington offstage. Mrs Otis shrugs and follows them both. Lord Canterville pauses for a second, looks around the empty room and then exits smiling.

The End

Quick Comprehension Check

Scene 1

- What is the name of the house and its present owner?
- Why does Lord Canterville hate getting letters?
- Who is Mrs Umney?
- Who bought Canterville Hall?
- Who are Lord Canterville's ancestors? Complete the names below and draw lines to match them with the corresponding statements:

Sir …… the Stupid	was married five times
Lady ……... Canterville	was a gambler and a thief
Lady …….. de Canterville	tripped over a set of bagpipes
Sir …….. McCanterville	thought he was a dog
Dame …….. Canterville	was tone-deaf

- What are the names of the Otis children?
- What is going to happen to Canterville Hall? Why?
- Why can't they get into the room next to the attic?
- What does Lord Canterville tell the Otis family about Canterville Hall?
- Find three adjectives to describe Washington's attitude.

Scene 2

- How does Virginia feel about Canterville Hall?
- Why is it so important for Mrs Otis to build the new housing estate?

Scene 3

- What happens every time the ghost appears? Complete the sentences below:

  There is a ……

  The …….. twelve.

- What is the name of the ghost? What is he wearing?
- Why does Sir Simon have a cold?
- Does Sir Simon like Washington? What is he planning to do?

Scene 4

- What kind of video game is Washington playing?
- How does Mrs Otis feel about these games?
- Where does Sir Simon appear from?
- Does Washington realize Sir Simon is a ghost?
- Is he scared of him, do you think? Say why/why not!
- Why does he want to play a trick on Virginia? How?

Scene 5

- What is Virginia trying to do in her room?
- How does she react to the masked figure? Does she know who it is?
- Who can actually <u>see</u> and <u>hear</u> Sir Simon? Tick *yes* or *no* below!

Virginia	❒	yes	❒	no
Washington	❒	yes	❒	no
Mrs Otis	❒	yes	❒	no

- Why is Mrs Otis so angry with Washington?
- Sir Simon tells Virginia he doesn't want Canterville Hall knocked down. Why?
- What is the Canterville riddle and where is it?
- Why did Sir Simon murder his wife?

Scene 6

- Why does the demolition of Canterville Hall have to be brought forward?
- How long does Virginia have to solve the riddle?
- How does she persuade Washington to help her find out about the secret?
- Why do Virginia and Washington need help with the riddle?

Scene 7

- Why is Mrs Otis's hot chocolate drink suddenly cold?
- When Sir Simon was alive, people used guns as weapons. When did people use shields? What is this historical period called?
- Look at the statements below and decide what the sentence *There are none so blind as those who will not see* means:

  ❒ Blind people cannot see
  ❒ People who cannot see ghosts are blind
  ❒ People who cannot see ghosts have no imagination

- How is Washington trying to help his mother getting her imagination back?
- What happens when Mrs Otis can suddenly see Sir Simon?
- Who did the shield belong to? When did he live?
- What does Virginia find in the rim of the shield?

- According to the last line of the riddle, what does Sir Simon have to do now?
- Why is Sir Simon so grateful to Virginia? What did she teach him?
- Where are Sir Simon's bones?

Scene 8

- What did Lord Canterville give Virginia?
- What did they find in the room next to the attic?
- What is the deal between Mrs Otis and Lord Canterville?
- Why is Virginia so happy now?
- What is she planning to do when she gets back to L.A.?
- How does Washington feel about the title of Virginia's story?

- Did you like the play? Say why/why not!
- Which of the characters did you like best? Why?
- Were there any characters you didn't like at all? Why?
- Which part(s) of the play did you find really funny? Interesting? Silly? Romantic? Boring?
- If you could change places with one of the characters, who would you like to be? Say why. Anyone you would not like to be? Why?
- Was the play easy to understand?
- With your English and History teachers, look at the **Georgian era** (1714 to 1830) and find out more about the **Hanoverian Kings**.
  Consider the following questions:
  Who ruled the Austrian Empire at that time?
  When was Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart born?
  What was going on in the British Colony of America at the time?
  When was Johann Wolfgang von Goethe born and when did he die?
- On a separate sheet of paper, make a drawing of Sir Simon for the picture Gallery in Canterville Hall. What did he look like, do <u>you</u> think? Don't forget to draw a nice frame around it! Compare with your colleagues' drawings and vote for the best drawing in class.

VIENNA'S English THEATRE
SINCE 1963

1966	MAN OF DESTINY by George Bernard Shaw
1967	THE HAPPY JOURNEY by Thornton Wilder
1968	VILLAGE WOOING by George Bernard Shaw
1970	THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST by Oscar Wilde
1971	THE GLASS MENAGERIE by Tennessee Williams
1972	MAN OF DESTINY by George Bernard Shaw
1973	LOVERS by Brian Friel
1973	AN INSPECTOR CALLS by J. B. Priestley
1974	THE HAPPY JOURNEY by Thornton Wilder
1975	OF LOVERS AND FOOLS, scenes from Shakespeare as arranged by Manfred Vogel
1976	A SLIGHT ACCIDENT by James Saunders
	LOOK BACK IN ANGER by John Osborne
1977	THE HAPPY JOURNEY by Thornton Wilder
	ARMS AND THE MAN by George Bernard Shaw
1978	FAMILY ALBUM by David Newby
	AN INSPECTOR CALLS by J. B. Priestley
1979	THE CANTERVILLE GHOST by Nicholas Allen, based on the story by Oscar Wilde
	ALL MY SONS by Arthur Miller
1980	THE HAPPY JOURNEY by Thornton Wilder
	MAN OF DESTINY by George Bernard Shaw
1981	FAMILY ALBUM by David Newby
	RELATIVELY SPEAKING by Alan Ayckbourn
1982	THE CANTERVILLE GHOST by Nicholas Allen, based on the story by Oscar Wilde
	A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS by Robert Bolt
1983	ROBIN HOOD by Nicholas Allen. An entertainment with music
	LOVERS by Brian Friel
1984	THE HAPPY JOURNEY by Thornton Wilder
1984/85	KING ARTHUR by Nicholas Allen. An entertainment with music
	THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST by Oscar Wilde
1985/86	THE CANTERVILLE GHOST by Nicholas Allen, based on the story by Oscar Wilde
	THE GLASS MENAGERIE by Tennessee Williams
1986/87	SONGS AND DREAMS by Nicholas Allen
	SAME TIME, NEXT YEAR by Bernard Slade
1987/88	DICK WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT by Sean Aita
	LOOK BACK IN ANGER by John Osborne
1988/89	THE WIDOW'S DIAMONDS by Nicholas Allen
	THE PRIVATE EAR by Peter Schaffer
1989/90	ROBIN HOOD by Nicholas Allen. An entertainment with music
	IN PRAISE OF LOVE by Terence Rattigan
1990/91	THE HAPPY JOURNEY by Thornton Wilder
	DANGEROUS OBSESSION by N. F. Crisp
1991/92	RICHARD THE LIONHEART by Nicholas Allen
	THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH by Sean Aita
	THE ZOO STORY by Edward Albee
1992/93	SONGS AND DREAMS by Nicholas Allen
	STAGE BY STAGE by Jennie Graham
	I OUGHT TO BE IN PICTURES by Neil Simon
1993/94	TREASURE ISLAND by Sean Aita
	SHERLOCK HOLMES INVESTIGATES by Ingrid Statman
	RELATIVELY SPEAKING by Alan Ayckbourn
1994/95	FAMILY ALBUM by David Newby
	FREDDY AND THE CLOVEN HOOF by Adam Bridges
	LOVERS by Brian Friel
1995/96	THE CANTERVILLE GHOST by Nicholas Allen
	DRACULA by Sean Aita
	MY CHILDREN! MY AFRICA! by Athol Fugard
1996/97	CRUSOE by Nicholas Allen, based on the novel by Daniel Defoe
	LOVE HURTS by Sean Aita
	THE GLASS MENAGERIE by Tennessee Williams
1997/98	HUCKLEBERRY FINN by Sean Aita
	SUGAR AND SPICE by Philip Dart
	ALL MY SONS by Arthur Miller
1998/99	THE SWORD AND THE CROWN by Sean Aita
	BOTTLING OUT by Philip Dart
	BUTTERFLIES ARE FREE by Leonard Gershe
1999/00	BANANAS by Sean Aita and Nicholas Allen
	DANCE CLASS by Clive Duncan
	THE BROWNING VERSION by Terence Rattigan
2000/01	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS by Sean Aita
	MILLENNIUM by Sean Aita
	BLUE GIRL by Deborah Aita
2001/02	HOTMAIL FROM HELSINKI by Judy Upton
	ROMY AND JULIAN by Clive Duncan
	THE LAST YANKEE by Arthur Miller
2002/03	A PERFECT MATCH by Sean Aita
	A DOG'S LIFE by Sean Aita
	DANGEROUS OBSESSION by N.J Crisp
2003/04	STREETS OF LONDON by Sean Aita
	WILD WEEKEND by Clive Duncan
	BUTTERFLIES ARE FREE by Leonard Gershe
2004/05	THE CANTERVILLE GHOST adapted from Oscar Wilde by Clive Duncan
	SUGAR AND SPICE by Philip Dart
	MACBETH adapted from Shakespeare by Clive Duncan
2005/06	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS by Sean Aita
	ROMY & JULIAN by Clive Duncan
	THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND a Woody Guthrie Folk Musicale devised by David M. Lutken
2006/07	REVOLTING BRITONS by Clive Duncan
	DANCE CLASS by Clive Duncan
	LOOK BACK IN ANGER by John Osborne
2007/08	VIRTUAL HEROES by Clive Duncan
	WILD WEEKEND by Clive Duncan
	PITCH BLACK by Clive Duncan
2008/09	PERFECT MATCH by Sean Aita
	LITTLE GIRL LIES by Claudia Leaf
	VIRGINS by John Retallack
2009/10	FAME GAME by Philip Dart
	SACRIFICE by Claudia Leaf
	MACBETH by William Shakespeare adapted by Clive Duncan
2010/11	ROB AND THE HOODIES by Sean Aita
	ROMY & JULIAN by Clive Duncan
	BUTTERFLIES ARE FREE by Leonard Gershe
2011/12	THE SWITCH by Philip Dart
	DISCONNECTED by Adam Barnard
	PITCH BLACK by Clive Duncan
2012/13	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS by Sean Aita
	JEKYLL'S POTION by James Cawood
	A PICTURE by Clive Duncan
2013/14	VIRTUAL HEROES by Clive Duncan
	POPULAR by Philip Dart
	PRETTY SHREWD by Clive Duncan
2014/15	SPOOKED! by Sean Aita
	DANCE CLASS by Clive Duncan
	THE MAKEOVER by Clive Duncan
2015/16	THE FAME GAME by Philip Dart
	UNDERCOVER STAR by Robin Kingsland
	VIRGINS by John Retallack
2016/17	ROB AND THE HOODIES by Sean Aita
	THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES by David Taylor
	MACBETH adapted from W. Shakespeare by Clive Duncan
2017/18	A FAMILY AFFAIR by Sean Aita
	ROMY & JULIAN by Clive Duncan
	THE VISIT by Philip Dart
2018/19	THE LITTLE PRINCE by Sean Aita, freely adapted from Saint-Exupéry
	WILD WEEKEND by Clive Duncan
	HAMLET by Clive Duncan, freely adapted from Shakespeare
2019/20	SPOOKED! by Sean Aita
	WEB OF LIES by Sean Aita
	PRETTY SHREWD by Clive Duncan