

## The Ghosts of Two Boring Gentlemen

BY W. GOODRIDGE ROBERTS

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"As like a fiend he flitteth by."

"A wandering soul, who hath no script nor gold,  
Nor anywhere to sleep."

Solitude is seldom so appreciated as when two boring gentlemen have just departed.

Although the adorable Mrs. Loveday did not believe that all afflictions were God's messengers sent down to her, still her innate gentleness so far imposed upon her good-nature that for the past three months she had daily received those two afflictions, Messrs. Chaucer and deBere, with faultless courtesy.

Now she watched them from her balcony; saw how their black hats were tall and lustrous in the moon-light, and made up her mind that something must be done.

With the death of her husband, Mrs. Loveday had ceased to assert herself; and as her husband had entered into that state of uncertainty over a year ago, she might now be considered psychoanalytically to be a good example of the sofa-cushion complex-unresisting irresistible.

The narration of the following events should go a long way toward refuting any such conception of her character.

For three months Mrs. Loveday had affected an appreciation of Mr. Chaucer's endless theorizing as he sat in her biggest arm-chair; smoked the biggest pipe she had ever seen, and, with his eyes shut, contemplated a Divine Providence, or propounded the force of precepts.

For an equal length of time she had pretended to take pleasure in Mr. deBere's visits, as he sat on her smallest chair, looking very dainty, and repeating his little lesson, "Really. Rather. Awfully jolly."

Now she realized that this nonsense must stop. The tall hats bobbed lustrously round a corner, and a fat moon drowsed among the chimney-pots.

Some poor poet wandering in a trance saw her leaning from her balcony, and after she had re-entered the house, he walked on reciting "The Blessed Damozel."