

Äí[Introduction]íÄ

I HAVE CHOSEN TO DO MY BOOK REPORT ON A BOOK CALLED...

Real Ghosts

fÄí[WHAT IS A GHOST SUPPOSE TO LOOK LIKE ?¿?¿]íÄf

FIRST YOU MAY THINK OF SOMETHING IN A WHITE SHEET WITH HOLES FOR EYES, YOU MAY THINK OF A RAGGED FIGURE DRAGGING CHAINS AND MOANING. OR AN IDEA OF A GHOST MAY BE A FIGURE YOU CAN SEE THROUGH, SOMETHING THAT GOES IN AND OUT OF ROOMS WITHOUT NEEDING TO OPEN DOORS. THAT IS THE WAY GHOSTS ARE USUALLY DESCRIBED IN STORIES OR SHOWN IN MOVIES. BUT REAL GHOSTS COME IN MANY DIFFERENT SIZES AND SHAPES. SOMETIMES THEY ARE STRANGE AND FRIGHTENING LOOKING. SOMETIMES THEY LOOK VERY ORDINARY. IT IS HARD TO TELL THEY ARE GHOSTS AT ALL. OFTEN GHOSTS CANNOT BE SEEN, BUT ARE JUST HEARD AND FELT. THIS BOOK IS ABOUT REAL GHOSTS.

ARE GHOSTS REAL ?

m AT 3:25 PM AN AIRPLANE CRASHES AND THE PILOT IS KILLED. BUT AT THE SAME TIME IN ANOTHER CITY, A LIEUTENANT CLAIMS THAT HE SAW AND SPOKE WITH THE PILOT.

m A JUDGE SAYS THAT HE HAD A CONVERSATION IN HIS HOME WITH A REPORTER AT 1:30 THE NIGHT BEFORE. BUT AT 1:30 THAT NIGHT THE REPORTER HAD DIED OF A HEART ATTACK IN HIS OWN BED.

m IN AN OLD MANSION IN ENGLAND A PHOTOGRAPHER ACTUALLY SNAPS A PICTURE OF A SHADY FIGURE ON A STAIRCASE. IT IS THE "BROWN LADY" OF RAYNHAM HALL. EACH OF THESE PEOPLE CLAIMS THAT HE REALLY SAW A GHOST. IN THIS

BOOK THE AUTHOR (DANIEL COHEN) INVESTIGATES MANY STRANGE STORIES. SOMETIMES HE UNCOVERS A HOAX, BUT OTHER STORIES LEAVE PUZZLING QUESTIONS...

DO SPIRITS REALLY HAUNT OLD HOUSES ?¿

CAN A HUMAN BE TRANSPORTED BACK INTO THE PAST ?¿

ARE GHOSTS REAL ?¿

RETURN FROM THE DEAD ?

A MAN NAMED JOHN THORNE LIVED NEAR AN OLD HAUNTED HOUSE. IN 1958 HE HAD AN ODD EXPERIENCE...HE WOKE UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT TO FIND A STRANGE WOMAN IN HIS BEDROOM.IT WAS DARK,BUT HE COULD STILL SEE THAT SHE WAS WEARING A LONG DRESS,THE KIND PEOPLE WORE A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.THORNE TURNED THE LIGHTS ON,AND THE FIGURE HAD DISAPPEARED.....

ON 1961 THORNE'S BROTHER,WILLIAM,CAME FOR A VISIT.ON THE FIRST NIGHT WILLIAM HEARD FOOTSTEPS OUTSIDE THE DOOR.WHEN HE LOOKED OUT OF THE OPEN DOOR...HE SAW A WOMAN IN A LONG BLACK DRESS HOLDING A HANDKERCHIEF IN HER HAND.SUDDENLY THE ROOM BECAME VERY COLD.....

THE REAL EXORCISTS AND OTHERS

THE EXORCIST WAS AN EXTREMELY POPULAR BOOK.IT WAS ABOUT A YOUNG GIRL WHO WAS "POSSESSED" BY THE DEVIL.IT TOOK A RITUAL CALLED "EXORCISM" TO DRIVE OUT THE EVIL SPIRIT.AN EVEN MORE POPULAR MOVIE WAS MADE FROM THE BOOK.PEOPLE THOUGHT THAT THE MOVIE AND THE BOOK WERE TRUE.THEY WERE NOT.THE BOOK WAS A PIECE OF FICTION WRITTEN BY WILLIAM P. BLATTY.BUT BLATTY'S BOOK WAS BASED ON A REAL CASE.ONE OF THE REASONS THAT THE BOOK AND THE MOVIE WERE SO POPULAR,IS THAT PEOPLE THOUGHT THEY WERE ACTUALLY A REAL CASE.HERE WE HAVE TO BE VERY CAREFUL."BASED ON" IN NOT "THE SAME AS." THE WRITER AND THE MOVIE PRODUCERS MADE MANY CHANGES IN ORDER TO MAKE "THE EXORCIST" MORE DRAMATIC AND EXCITING THAN THE CASE THAT INSPIRED IT.IN THE BOOK AND THE MOVIE,THE "POSSESSED" SUBJECT WAS A YOUNG GIRL.IN THE REAL CASE IT WAS A BOY.AND THAT WAS JUST ONE OF THE CHANGES MADE.THERE WERE MANY,MANY,MANY MORE.

A LARGE PART OF THE EXORCIST WAS NOT BASED ON ANYTHING AT ALL. IT WAS JUST MADE UP. ONE REASON IS THAT WE REALLY DON'T KNOW A GREAT DEAL ABOUT THE REAL CASE. VERY FEW RECORDS WERE KEPT. NOT ALL OF WHAT FEW THERE HAVE BEEN MADE PUBLIC. SOME OF THOSE INVOLVED IN THE CASE HAVE SINCE DIED. MANY OTHERS JUST DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT ANYMORE. HERE IS WHAT WE DO KNOW. THE CASE BEGAN EARLY IN 1949. THE POSSESSED SUBJECT WAS A FOURTEEN YEAR OLD BOY WHO WAS CALLED DOUGLAS DEEN. HE LIVED WITH HIS FAMILY IN A SUBURB OF WASHINGTON D.C.

THE FIRST THING THE FAMILY NOTICED WAS STRANGE NOISES COMING FROM THE BOY'S ROOM. THEY SUSPECTED MICE. EXTERMINATORS WERE CALLED IN BUT FOUND NOTHING. AND THE NOISES CONTINUED...

THE DISTURBANCES BECAME MORE VIOLENT. HEAVY FURNITURE MOVED BACK AND FORTH. A BOWL FELL OFF THE TOP OF THE REFRIDGERATOR FOR NO APPARENT REASON. A PICTURE SEEMED TO JUMP OFF THE WALL. THE WORST DISTURBANCES TOOK PLACE IN THE BOY'S BEDROOM. HIS BED SHOOK AND TREMBLED ALL NIGHT. THE NOISE KEPT DOUGLAS AND HIS PARENTS AWAKE NIGHT AFTER NIGHT. THE DEEN'S TALKED ABOUT EVENTS WITH THEIR NEIGHBOURS. THE NEIGHBOURS LAUGHED AT FIRST. BUT AFTER THEY SPENT A NIGHT IN THE DEEN'S HOUSE THEY STOPPED LAUGHING. THE NEIGHBOURS ALSO BEGAN TO BELIEVE THAT SOMETHING VERY STRANGE WAS GOING ON. BUT WHAT ?

THE DEEN FAMILY THEN CALLED IN THE MINISTER OF THEIR CHURCH, THE REVEREND MR. WINSTON. THE MINISTER, TOO, WAS SCEPTICAL. BUT HE DECIDED TO INVESTIGATE MORE CLOSELY. HE SPENT THE ENTIRE NIGHT OF FEBRUARY 17, 1949 IN DOUGLAS DEEN'S BEDROOM. LATER, THE REVEREND MR. WINSTON DESCRIBED WHAT HAPPENED THAT NIGHT TO A MEETING OF THE SOCIETY OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY IN WASHINGTON.

FIRST, THE BOY'S BED BEGAN TO SHAKE. THEN THERE WERE SCRATCHING

AND SCRAPINGS FROM THE WALL.THE MINISTER SWITCHED ON THE LIGHTS BUT COULD SEE NOTHING THAT MIGHT BE CAUSING THE DISTURBANCES. THE MINISTER THEN ASKED THE BOY TO SIT IN AN ARMCHAIR.THE CHAIR BEGAN TO MOVE AROUND THE ROOM SLOWLY.THEN IT STARTED ROCKING BACK AND FORTH.FINALLY,IT TIPPED OVER,THROWING THE BOY ON THE FLOOR.

REVEREND WINSTON THOUGHT IT WOULD BE BEST TO GET THE BOY OFF THE FURNITURE THAT SEEMED TO MOVE.HE TOLD THE BOY TO TAKE HIS PILLOW AND BLANKETS AND SLEEP ON THE FLOOR.WHILE REVEREND WINSTON WATCHED,THE BOY AND THE BEDDING BEGAN TO SLIDE ACROSS THE ROOM. REVEREND WINSTON WAS THEN CONVINCED THAT SOMETHING VERY ODD WAS GOING ON.BUT HE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT ?¿ HE FELT THAT THE EVENTS WERE BEYOND HIS UNDERSTANDING AND CONTROL.

THE BOY WAS TAKEN TO GEORGETOWN HOSPITAL FOR BOTH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL TESTS.THE TESTS TURNED UP NOTHING.VISITS TO THE PSYCHIATRISTS DID NOT MAKE THE DISTURBANCES THAT CENTRED AROUND THE FOURTEEN YEAR OLD DISAPPEAR.

THE DEEN FAMILY BECAME DESPERATE.THEY FINALLY DEPENDED ON A DRASTIC CURE.THEY CALLED IN A PRIEST TO PERFORM AN "EXORCISM." EXORCISM IS A VERY OLD RITUAL.ITS PURPOSE IS TO DRIVE OUT DEMONS.IT IS NOT USED VERY OFTEN IN THE MODERN WORLD. MANY PEOPLE DO NOT APPROVE OF USING IT AT ALL.BUT THE FAMILY DIDN'T KNOW WHERE ELSE TO TURN.THEY BELIEVED THAT EXORCISM WAS THEIR LAST HOPE.THE PRIEST WHO PERFORMED THE EXORCISM REMAINED WITH THE BOY FOR OVER TWO MONTHS.DURING THE PERIOD HE PERFORMED THE LONG EXORCISM RITE THIRTY TIMES.WHILE THE RITUAL WAS GOING ON,THE BOY WOULD TREMBLE VIOLENTLY.SOMETIMES HE WOULD BEGIN TO SCREAM.THEN THE VOICE WAS NOT AT ALL LIKE HIS NORMAL VOICE. IN MAY 1949,THE PRIEST WENT THROUGH THE ENTIRE RITUAL AGAIN.THE BOY DID NOT REACT VIOLENTLY AS HE USUALLY DID.THE PRIEST ASSUMED

THAT THE DEMON HAD BEEN DRIVEN OUT.AFTER THAT THE BOY WAS NO LONGER TROUBLED BY SHAKING BEDS OR MOVING FURNITURE.

WHAT DOES ALL OF THIS HAVE TO DO WITH GHOSTS ?

PERHAPS A GREAT DEAL.PSYCHICAL RESEARCHERS FOUND THE DETAILS OF THIS CASE VERY FAMILIAR.THE UNEXPLAINED NOISES,THE SHAKING FURNITURE,AND THE REST OF THE THINGS THAT HAPPENED TO THE DEEN'S BOY HAD TROUBLED MANY OTHERS.USUALLY THESE DISTURBANCES WERE NOT BLAMED ON DEMONS.THEY WERE SAID TO BE DUE TO ACTIVITIES OF A "POLTERGEIST." POLTERGEIST IS A GERMAN WORD,WHICH MEANS "NOISY GHOST" OR "NOISY SPIRIT."

BUT IN A POLTERGEIST CASE,PEOPLE DON'T USUALLY SEE ANY FIGURES AT ALL.WHAT HAPPENS IS JUST WHAT HAPPENED IN THE DEEN'S CASE. THERE ARE ALL SORTS OF UNEXPLAINED DISTURBANCES IN A HOUSE. OFTEN THESE DISTURBANCES ARE BLAMED ON A UNSEEN SPIRIT...A POLTERGEIST.HUNDREDS OF POLTERGEIST CASES CAN BE FOUND IN THE RECORDS OF DIFFERENT PSYCHICAL RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS.REPORTS OF SUCH EXPERIENCES GO BACK TO THE ANCIENT TIMES.NEW ONES ARE REPORTED EVERY YEAR.USUALLY PSYCHICAL RESEARCHERS HEAR ABOUT THE CASE AFTER IT IS OVER,THAT IS,AFTER THE DISTURBANCES HAVE STOPPED.BUT OCCASIONALLY THEY ARE ABLE TO INVESTIGATE WHILE THE DISTURBANCES ARE STILL GOING ON.THAT HAPPENED IN 1958.WE LIKE TO THINK OF GHOSTS OR SPIRITS HAUNTING CRUMBLING CASTLES OR ANCIENTS HOUSES.THIS GHOST BEGAN CAUSING TROUBLE IN A MODERN RANCH HOUSE.THE HOUSE WAS LOCATED IN THE VERY ORDINARY SUBURBAN COMMUNITY OF SEAFORD, LONG ISLAND.IN THE HOUSE LIVED MR. AND MRS. JAMES HERMANN AND THEIR TWO CHILDREN.THE CHILDREN WERE A GIRL LUCILLE, THIRTEEN,AND A BOY JIMMY,TWELVE.MOST OF THE DISTURBANCES SEEMED TO CENTRE AROUND THE BOY.WHEN HE WAS AROUND THINGS BEGAN

TO HAPPEN. THE DISTURBANCES BEGAN ON FEBRUARY 3. FIRST, THE FAMILY HEARD WHAT SOUNDED LIKE POPPING BOTTLES. WHEN THEY WENT TO SEE WHAT WAS WRONG, THEY FOUND BOTTLES IN SEVERAL PARTS OF THE HOUSE THAT HAD BEEN MYSTERIOUSLY OPENED AND SPILLED. A FEW SMALL OBJECTS HAD ALSO BEEN BROKEN. STRANGE NOISES AND BOTTLE OPENINGS CONTINUED FOR THREE DAYS. THE FAMILY BECAME VERY CONCERNED. THEY CALLED THE POLICE. PATROLMAN J. HUGHES CAME TO THE HOUSE. HE TOO HEARD SOME NOISE. HE LOOKED IN THE BATHROOM AND FOUND THAT SOME MEDICINE AND SHAMPOO HAD BEEN OPEN AND SPILLED. HE COULD NOT EXPLAIN HOW IT HAPPENED. NO ONE HAD BEEN IN THE BATHROOM. SOME OF THE HERMANN'S RELATIVES ALSO HAD STRANGE EXPERIENCES. A COUSIN OF MR. HERMANN SAW A STATUE MOVE AROUND A TABLE. THEN IT FLEW TWO FEET IN THE AIR AND LANDED ON THE RUG. SOME OF THE BOTTLES WERE TAKEN TO THE POLICE LABORATORY. THE ELECTRIC COMPANY CHECKED THE HOUSE TO SEE IF ANYTHING WAS WRONG WITH THE ELECTRICITY. BUILDING INSPECTORS AND THE FIRE DEPARTMENTS ALSO EXAMINED THE HOUSE. EVERYTHING ABOUT IT SEEMED NORMAL. THEY COULD NOT FIND NOTHING TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DISTURBANCES. THE HERMANN'S FAMILY WAS VERY UPSET BY THESE GOING-ONS. THEY APPEALED TO THE PUBLIC FOR HELP. NATURALLY THE APPEAL GOT INTO THE NEWSPAPERS. THE LONG ISLAND POLTERGEIST BECAME FAMOUS. NEWS OF THE POLTERGEIST REACHED DR. J.G. PRATT IN NORTH CAROLINA. DR. PRATT IS ONE OF AMERICA'S LEADING RESEARCHERS ON THE SUBJECT OF HAUNTING, GHOSTS, AND OTHER UNEXPLAINED EVENTS. HE CAME UP TO LONG ISLAND TO INVESTIGATE THE CASE IN PERSON. HE INTERVIEWED EVERYONE CONNECTED WITH THE CASE. HE CHECKED OVER THE HOUSE, AND EXAMINED ALL THE OBJECTS THAT HAD BEEN DISTURBED. BY THE TIME DR. PRATT ARRIVED, THE DISTURBANCES HAD DIED DOWN CONSIDERABLY. HE DIDN'T SEE ANY OBJECTS FLY ACROSS THE ROOM. HE DID HEAR A FEW STRANGE THUMPS COMING FROM JIMMY'S ROOM. HE WAS NOT ABLE TO COME UP WITH ANY EXPLANATION FOR THE CASE.

HE JUST LEFT AS PUZZLED AS HE WAS WHEN HE CAME.THE CASE HAS
NEVER BEEN SOLVED.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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