

DEFOE DANIEL

THE FRIENDLY DAEMON,
OR THE GENEROUS
APPARITION

Daniel Defoe
**The Friendly Daemon, or
the Generous Apparition**

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*The Friendly Daemon, or the Generous Apparition / Being a True Narrative
of a Miraculous Cure, Newly Perform'd / Upon That Famous Deaf and
Dumb Gentleman, Dr. Duncan / Campbel, by a Familiar Spirit That
Appear'd to Him in a / White Surplice, Like a Cathedral Singing Boy:*

Содержание

To my anonymous worthy Friend, Physician and Philosopher, whose Name, for certain Reasons, I forbear to mention	6
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	13

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the Generous Apparition /
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A True Narrative of a miraculous Cure, newly

*perform'd upon that famous Deaf and Dumb Gentleman,
Dr. Duncan Campbel,*

*By a familiar Spirit that appear'd to him in a white
Surplice, like a Cathedral singing Boy.*

By Daniel Defoe.

*If by our Senses Spirits we perceive,
Or from the strength of Fancy, so believe,
No Fault do we commit that merits blame,
If to the Publick we report the same;
For whether by our Eyes we Spectres see
Or by a second Sight, we must agree,
Things are to us as they appear to be.*

**To my anonymous worthy Friend,
Physician and Philosopher,
whose Name, for certain
Reasons, I forbear to mention**

SIR,

I Cannot, without great Ingratitude, forget the friendly Visits and kind Advice I frequently receiv'd from you, during, not only, a dangerous but tedious Indisposition, which surprisingly seiz'd me in the Year 1717, and, notwithstanding your extraordinary Care as well as unquestionable Judgment, continu'd upon me till the latter end of the Year – 25; in which long interval of Time, the Attendance you gave me, and the Trouble you gave yourself, abstracted from all Interest, made you truly sensible of my unhappy Condition, and myself equally apprehensive of the great Obligations I shall ever be under to so sincere a Friend.

The first occasion of my Illness, as I have good reason to imagine, was a very shocking Surprise given me by certain Persons, who pretended to be my Friends in a considerable Affair then depending, wherein their Treachery threaten'd me with succeeding Ruin, had not Providence interpos'd and deliver'd the Oppress'd from the cruel hands of such deceitful Enemies: Upon whose hard Usage, and the news of my Disappointment,

I was struck at first with a kind of Epilepsy and depriv'd of all my Senses in an Instant, drop'd down in a publick Coffee-House, under violent Agitations, which, it seems, are generally concomitant with this miserable Distemper; but being luckily assisted and kindly supported by some Gentlemen present, I happen'd to escape those ill Consequences that might otherwise have attended me, during the extremity of my Convulsions, which were reported, by those that held me, to be so strong as to be almost insupportable, till the Paroxysm declin'd, which terminated in a cold Sweat, Trembling and Weeping, and this was the first Attack that ever this terrible Assailant made upon me; tho' afterwards he forc'd himself into a further familiarity with me (much against my Will) nor could your kind Endeavours, by the Art of Physick, back'd with my own strength of Constitution, fright away this evil Companion from me, till my good Genius, by the direction of Providence, communicated a particular Secret to me, which, with God's Blessing, has lately prov'd my Deliverance, in what manner, before I conclude, I shall very freely acquaint you, in hopes you will favour me with your candid Opinion in answer thereunto.

Near eight Years, was a long Time to continue under the frequent returns and uncomfortable dread of such a shocking Affliction, which, upon every little disorder of Mind or disappointment in Business, never fail'd to visit me; till, by convulsive or involuntary Motions in my Head and other Parts of my Body, my Eyes were bury'd in their Sockets, my other

Features contracted, my Limbs often distorted, my Bowels sometimes wrack'd with intolerable Pains, and all the Faculties of my Mind so greatly weaken'd and impair'd, that I, who, for many Years before, had been esteem'd as an Oracle, by the most Polite and Curious part of both Sexes, was now, for want of strength of Mind and ability of Body to imploy my Talent and excercise my Art as usual, treated like an old Soldier, who had lost his Limbs in the Service of his Country, and thought only worthy, by way of requital, to be made a hobbling Pensioner in some starving Hospital; but, I thank my Stars, it prov'd not quite so bad with me, for tho' some Ladies were too hasty and importunate to bear with the least disappointment or admit of any delay, without shewing their resentment, or refusing to trust their Money till my Convulsions afforded me a rational Interval, wherein I might be able to give them ample Satisfaction: Yet, others, of a more considerate, easy and compassionate Temper, were so highly concern'd for my too apparent Indisposition, that, in order to drive out this tormenting Demon that possess'd me, they brought me all the old Recipes they could muster up among their crazy Aunts and Grandmothers, practis'd upon all Occasions in their several Families, perhaps ever since the Times of *Galen* and *Hippocrates*, but, having been long under the Care and Friendship of so able a Physician as your self, tho' to little or no purpose, I could nor put Faith enough in old Womens Medicines to receive Benefit thereby, so, under a kind of despondency of every thing but Providence, I suffer'd

my Distemper to take its own Course, till my Fits encreas'd upon me, to at least twenty in a Day, and by their frequent reiterations brought, at length, such a dimness upon my Sight, such a weakness in my Joints, and tremor upon my Nerves, that render'd me incapable of all manner of Business, especially that which I had so long profess'd and successfully perform'd, to the full Satisfaction and great Astonishment of Thousands; but being now unable to Write; and, for want of Speech, having no other way of communicating my Answers to the demands of the Ladies and Gentlemen that apply'd themselves to me, except by Digitation, which they understood not, I was forc'd sometimes, when much disorder'd by my Convulsions, to send 'em away dissatisfy'd, which, if it were any Mortification to them, prov'd a much greater to my self, because, upon my ready performances in the Mystery I am Master of, depends the welfare of my whole Family.

Under these unhappy Circumstances I labour'd till the Month of *October*, in the Year – 24, confin'd by my Distemper to my own Habitation, not daring to go abroad for fear of falling in the Streets, having been before surpriz'd by my Fits in *St. James's* Park and several other Places; but, about this Time, being possess'd with a strong Inclination to the Cold-Bath, near *Sir John Oldcastle's*, and the great desire I had to experience the same, being highly encourag'd by your Advice and Approbation, I summon'd all the Strength I had to my Assistance, and pursuant to the Dictates of my own restless Mind, had recourse thither

accordingly, attended by a proper Person to take due Care of me, for fear of the worst.

I had not repeated this cold Expedient above twice or thrice, but I was sensible of the Benefits I receiv'd thereby, for my Distemper began to treat me with less severity than usual, and my Fits were succeeded with a greater Defluction of Tears than what was common, before I apply'd my self to the Bath, so that, after my Weeping was over, I found my self much refresh'd and all my Faculties abundantly more alert, than at any Time they had been since my first Illness, insomuch, that, from a timely continuance of this external Application, I entertain'd great hopes of a perfect Recovery; but, notwithstanding my diligent Prosecution of this sharp and shivering Method, I was, to my great Sorrow, unhappily disappointed; for my Convulsions were as frequent, tho' not so violent as formerly, and I was now again divested of all hopes of Relief, except by the Hand of Providence, having nothing to trust to, but that infallible Physician who can Cure all things in an Instant.

The Despondency I was now under of any Assistance from humane Art, and the slender Opinion you seem'd to entertain of my Recovery, made my Intervals as Melancholy as my Fits were troublesome; oppress'd with these hard Circumstances, I supported a burthensome Life, and drag'd on the tedious Hours till the latter end of the Year – 25, about which Time, as I was slumbering one Morning in my Bed, after a restless Night, my good *Genius* or Guardian Angel, Cloth'd in a white Surplice like

a singing Boy, appear'd before me, holding a Scrowle or Label in his right Hand, whereon the following Words were wrote in large Capitals.

READ, BELIEVE AND PRACTISE, THE
LOADSTONE SHALL BE YOUR CURE, WITH AN
ADDITION OF THE POWDER HERE PRESCRIB'D
YOU; BUT KEEP THE LAST AS A SECRET; FOR
WITH THAT AND THE MAGNET YOU SHALL
RELIEVE NUMBERS IN DISTRESS, AND LIVE
TO DO GREATER WONDERS THAN YOU HAVE
HITHERTO PERFORM'D; THEREFORE BE OF GOOD
CHEAR, FOR YOU HAVE A FRIEND UNKNOWN,
WHO, IN THE TIME OF TROUBLE, WILL NEVER
FAIL YOU.

This comfortable News, tho' deliver'd to me after so surprizing a manner, yet, was it very welcome to a languishing Person under a complication of Misfortunes, notwithstanding I had a great struggle with my natural Reason, before I could convince my self of what I was yet confident my very Eyes had seen, or at least had been represented to me after an extraordinary manner, for betwixt really seeing what we call a Vision or verily believing we do see it, there is but a slender difference; however, the intire Confidence I had put in Providence, and the great desire I had to be reliev'd, were to me convincing Arguments, beyond all Objection, that my Guardian Angel had actually appear'd and communicated to my Eyes the very Scrowle that I had read, the Words of which, lest my Memory should have prov'd

treacherous, I enter'd in my Pocket-Book as they are before recited, the Recipe only excepted.

Having thus subjected my Reason to my Senses, or at least my Faith, for I either saw or believ'd I saw what I have here reported, I had nothing else to do, but to put in Practice the Receipt which my good *Genius* had imparted to me, tho' how to come at a Loadstone, seem'd to me as difficult as to find out the Philosopher's Stone, having but a slender Knowledge of the thing it self, and much less of its Virtues; however, upon enquiry, I soon found out a certain Virtuoso, near *Moorfields*

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