

## **Sympathy Re Spiritualism Essential**

**By Michael Percy**

Saturday was housework day for Colin. Well, housework morning to be totally accurate and Colin would insist on that. He had a two-bedroom flat and his record for housework was two hours and fifteen minutes. He had stopped himself from timing the housework because the race to finish was becoming an obsession and there were enough of those in his life already. All the same, housework started at 8am and if it was not complete by 10.45 Colin began to stress. Not least because he was not allowed any breakfast until housework was complete. Colin imposed that rule on himself in order to keep his focus on completion. Breakfast became a reward for completing the task whereas a race against the clock would have an unavoidable built in anxiety overload. In the housework department Colin preferred the carrot to the stick.

During this bout of housework Colin had occupied himself by considering his new theory about attaining a state of contentment in life. It was built around the idea that all human existence could be expressed as a function of moving, or arranging to move, inanimate objects from one place to another. This had led him to postulate that a contented life may arise from achieving a state in which as many objects as possible were in their rightful places and therefore needed no further adjustment.

He had started this process by testing his theory against as many human activities as he could imagine. Housework for example, involved moving vacuum cleaners, dusters, polish, mops, buckets and cleaners around the house in order to achieve the removal (i.e. movement) of dust and dirt from various surfaces. This proved the first part of his theory but defeated him in terms of the second part – there was no way of avoiding the movement of objects during housework.

In fact, he was as yet unable to conceive of a situation in which a human could exist without the need to move at least a minimum of items. Food for example, had to be moved from the plate to the mouth. And that ignored the question of how the food reached the plate in the first place. Of course the act of moving some objects could be placed in the category of achieving happiness. Golf, which Colin had never found attractive as a pastime, involved a lot of object displacement (as he had come to call it) and many people regarded displacing a ball from one part of a field to another as the complete definition of happiness.

The kitchen clock was at 10.37 and the last item to be cleaned (the oven) was finished. Time to move the sticky problem concerning inanimate object displacement to the back of his mind and move his bicycle out into the street and his bicycle clips onto his legs. Then he would allow the bicycle to move him to Huntswood Golf Club where he would order a large English breakfast and a mug of tea. For a second he caught himself pondering if the bicycle was moving him or if he was moving the bicycle, but he decided to call that one a draw and concentrate on the traffic.

The Saturday breakfast routine had come about in order to resolve an issue with the cooker at home. Colin found it a challenge to cook breakfast on a cooker he had just finished cleaning. He had discovered that by Sunday lunch time he felt at ease using the cooker again so Saturday food was always breakfast out; lunch a sandwich and dinner a take-away.

At the golf club, Sheila played a running joke on Colin. She always called out "morning Colin" without looking up from her newspaper. Despite her claim that he was as regular as clockwork, Colin guessed she must have been looking out for his arrival in the car park.

"Same as usual?" she asked.

"Please", he answered. He looked around the restaurant area and decided to sit at the corner table so he could enjoy either of two windows overlooking the course.

"I've laid your usual place Colin."

"Thanks," he said. He was always slightly irritated that she laid a place for him before he came in – implying that he always sat in the same place. Not true. He always considered where to sit and that was often the corner seat -

nothing wrong with that. After all, Sheila was always reading a newspaper when he arrived.

Colin wiped his knife and fork on his serviette and studied Sheila as she poured his tea at the bar. The life of a barmaid was a continual process of object displacement but best not to continue that line of thought – for now. She was a redhead. Colin’s wife had been a blonde but he found himself particularly attracted to redheads these days. As Sheila walked across the room with his tea he moved his gaze to study the golf buggies outside.

“How are you today Colin?”

“Fine, thanks.” He allowed his attention to come back to Sheila. “I checked the weather forecast – rain most of the weekend.”

“Thanks for that. I was planning to go shopping this afternoon”

“It’s always struck me that whilst men are accused of having obsessive hobbies – football, bird watching, gardening – shopping, as carried out by women, is excessively obsessive. “

“Obsessive? I always thought it was pretty important to buy food and clothing.”

“But women take shopping beyond the essential. You were wearing a dress last Saturday, for example, that was definitely not bought as an essential item.”

“I’m flattered you noticed. Did you like the dress?”

Colin began to fidget and had a strong desire to resume his study of the buggies. “Of course I did. Very nice. You wore it very well.”

“I think that’s a compliment, thank you Colin.” She smiled. “Don’t you think it’s essential that I wear dresses that catch the eye?”

Yes, in your case, in your job. Yes,” said Colin.

“That’s alright then,” said Sheila. She stepped back from the table and performed a twirl. “What do you think of this week’s offering?”

“Very nice. Tight dresses suit you.” He found himself staring at Sheila’s body. Not good. “Do the golfers... can any golfers use the buggies out there whenever they want?”

She laughed at him. “They have to book in advance.”

Steve, the cook, shouted from the kitchen: “Full English, extra beans, toast!”

“I’ll get your food,” said Sheila.

“Thanks”, said Colin, staring out of the window to avoid the strange discomfort of watching Sheila walk to the bar.

Colin worked methodically through his breakfast, glancing at Sheila as he did. Was she simply being a good barmaid or would she respond if he asked her out on a date. He had often thought about it and even subtly discovered what kind of films she liked. The cinema seemed like a good option because there was something else to focus on if the date was not going well and there was something to discuss afterwards if it did go well. Sheila was always friendly but today’s discussion went a tiny bit beyond friendly he thought - forcing him to look at her body like that. Was that meant as an encouragement?

He finished the sausage he always saved until last and decided to act. He drained his tea and walked to the bar.

“More tea? That’s a first.” She smiled and held out her hand for the cup which Colin was surprised to find was still in his hand.

“No.” he said. No tea thank you. I wanted to ask you... something.”

“Fire away, I’m all ears.”

“I wanted to ask if you wanted to ...”

“What?” she said. “The suspense is killing me.”

“Can I read your paper,” he blurted out as he grabbed the newspaper.

“Of course you can Colin. Feel free.” She looked confused, or was it disappointment?

Colin returned to his table and stared blankly at the front page. Sheila leaned across to remove his plate.

“Something special you want to read?” she asked.

“Nothing special,” he said.

“You okay Colin?”

“Yes I’m fine,” he said, throwing open the paper as Sheila returned to the bar, giving him one quizzical backward glance.

Bubbly tactile F WLTM tall n/s M WGSOH for fun and hopefully more.  
box M56993.

It was the Soulmates page of the local paper. WLTM? What could that mean? With Long Tousled Mane? Would Like To Marry? Would Like To Mate? Would Like To Meet?

Cross-dressing M seeks understanding F for friendship and fashion and make-up tips. Intimate relationship may be feasible. box FM56983

Intimate relationship may be feasible? Maybe?

Divorced F seeks n/s patient M for friendship and companionship. Sympathy re spiritualism essential. Box F810956.

“Sympathy re spiritualism essential,” Colin said out loud. Spiritualism. That sounded interesting and he became tempted to reply. He had never considered a blind date – perhaps this was fate. ‘Sympathy re spiritualism essential’. Potentially, there was a big advantage in responding to an advert that mentioned spiritualism - most men would be put off by ‘sympathy re spiritualism essential’ so he would stand a better chance. Colin regarded himself as unsuccessful with women – and probably unattractive to them as well.

Looking back he was not sure how he ended up married to Sonia but their three year relationship was an undeniable fact. The divorce was another area of mystery for him. One day things were okay – maybe okay was not enough with hindsight – and the next day he was searching for a bed sitter.

A bigger mystery was how to push a relationship beyond okay. Sonia had not given many clues and Colin thought this was unfair. If she was not happy then she should have said something. Maybe she did.

So a woman with a hobby could be good for him and when that hobby could have the effect of driving away some of the competition it was all the better. He copied the advert in his notebook and left.

He wrote his letter enclosing a photo which he assumed would be required. He caught the noon post on Sunday. On Tuesday evening he received a telephone call.

“Is that Colin who replied to my advertisement?”

“It is,” said Colin.

“This is Theresa who placed the advertisement.”

“Hello,” said Colin.

“Hello,” said Theresa. “Could I begin by asking you an important question?”

“That would be fine”, he said, thinking how efficient Theresa sounded.

“Do you really have a positive attitude to spiritualism?”

“Yes I do. I don’t understand it but I am willing to learn,” he said.

“Excellent,” said Theresa. “I imagine you have lost a loved one. Is that so?”

“Yes, my mother and my dad and years ago we had a dog – a Jack Russell called Binky. I used to come home from school and Binky would be waiting at the front gate and he would jump up and down barking hello and licking me,” said Colin.

“Have you been able to talk to either of your parents?” she asked.

“Not since they died,” said Colin. “And I haven’t heard from Binky either.”

“And I expect you are desperate to talk to them, aren’t you?”

“Naturally, that would be lovely.”

“Excellent, I can help you there. By the way, did you know that Jack Russells originated in Devon early in the nineteenth century and were named after the man who first bred them – a parson called John Russell. Of course his nickname was Jack which is how the breed got its name,” she added.

“If it was possible to contact Binky,” said Colin, “how would he talk to me – being a dog, if you see what I mean?”

There was a short silence on the telephone.

“Can I say,” confided Theresa, “ that there was one part of your letter which spoke to my heart. That was when you wrote about your fascination with the relationship between the happiness of those in the spirit world and the displacement of objects in time and space. That really moved me, I wrote it down.”

After that they agreed to arrange a meeting. Colin was struck by how everything had fallen into place. There were no embarrassing silences on the telephone and Theresa came over as a strong confident intelligent woman with a wide breadth of knowledge. Being able to move from the spirit world to the origins of Jack Russells in the same conversation was impressive. But

Colin had no problems with independent women with a lot to say. In fact, he preferred them like that.

Now he had to address the problem of the first date. They agreed to meet in a hotel bar and have a drink. All being well, Theresa had said they could go for dinner – Dutch of course.

The next part of Theresa's plan, if all went to her satisfaction, would move their relationship onto a more spiritual plane. She explained that she was a medium and qualified to take Colin on a journey that would put him in contact with the other side. His mum and dad would speak with their son again. Binky, the Jack Russell, was more problematic.

But the first date remained a problem. Colin planned to read up spiritualism so he would not be out of his depth. That was easy. Theresa seemed to be very reliable in the conversation department (no need to go to a film like he would with Sheila) but that still left the issue of what to wear.

Colin arrived at the bar of the Huntswood Golf Club just as it was opening and was standing opposite Sheila at the bar before she had a chance to look up and see who it was.

"My God, Colin. You've never been here mid-week before."

"I was passing."

"Would you like a drink?"

"Half of bitter please."

"It's on me. I like to encourage new mid-week trade. Will you be wanting any food?"

"No thank you. I was just passing. What do you think of these trousers with this shirt?"

Sheila put Colin's drink on the bar and walked round the bar to get a better view. He was wearing dark grey trousers and a blue checked shirt under a navy blue jacket.

"Not bad," she said, "but lose the tie." She reached forward and removed Colin's tie before smoothing out his shirt collar. He was very aware of her hands brushing his chin.

"That's better," she said. "More casual. Do you ever wear jeans?"

"On my bike, sometimes."

“Get yourself a pair of tight jeans under that jacket and you’d have an air of Jeremy Clarkson about you.”

“He’s a lot taller than me.”

“But you would have the look, the style of Jeremy. Little bit carefree, independent thinker, you know.”

“Do you think so?” he said, wishing there was a mirror handy.

“Have you got a date?”

Colin flushed a little. “Just a small one.”

“Anyone I know? No, of course I wouldn’t know her. All I know about you is what you have for breakfast.”

“Theresa is her name. She’s a spiritualist.”

“Sounds intriguing.”

Two late afternoon golfers came into the bar and Sheila went to serve them. “She’s a lucky girl,” she said over her shoulder, “Funny, I thought you were going to ask me out last Saturday,”

Luckily for Colin he was taking a swig from his drink so he was unable to blurt out that he had tried to ask her and would still like to. In the time it took him to swallow, common sense took over and he said, “Ask you out? Saturday? Is that what you thought?”

The date with Theresa was set for Friday night which gave him plenty of time to buy some jeans at Asda and press them into a nice crease. He had found some pictures of Jeremy Clarkson in a newspaper and began to worry that Sheila was joking with him. Clarkson looked positively scruffy with great bags at the knees of his jeans, unkempt hair, a droopy looking jacket and a dark blue shirt that appeared to have a button missing. And this was a photo in the Sunday Times Magazine. He looked round the hotel bar and found that jeans were in the majority (men and women) but most men had more casual tops than Colin’s jacket. At least Sheila was right about not wearing a tie.

Theresa was wearing a dress with a floral pattern that covered her knees, a white cardigan and disappointingly flat shoes. He could not help comparing her to Sheila. Colin got the drinks – half a bitter and a large sherry - and they sat at a table away from the bar.

“You’re very punctual,” said Colin.

“That’s only polite.”



“Did you have a good journey here?” He sipped his beer trying to time it so they finished their drinks simultaneously.

“I use buses so it’s best to allow extra time because they can be unreliable.”

Colin had prepared six questions in case the conversation lagged and he was feeling quite comfortable with five in hand. He was relying on Theresa to make the running in the conversation department.

“And they keep messing about with the services,” he said, checking the progress of her sherry. He looked up at Theresa and was met by her penetrating stare. He glanced over his shoulder thinking someone was there and then back to Theresa who seemed entranced by him.

“Are you okay?” he asked. No reply. “Theresa,” he said reaching forward and touching her arm. “You look like you’ve seen a ghost.”

Theresa jumped as if waking from a deep sleep. “I’m sorry”, she said. “That happens to me sometimes. I was picking up your aura. It’s amazing.”

“Is that a ghost?” asked Colin.

“No”, she said. “An aura is not a spirit. I do auras as well as spirits. Your aura is so strong, I would not normally expect to experience a person’s aura so soon.”

“Is that a good thing?”

“It means we have what I call commonality; you are opening up to me already.”

“What exactly is ‘aura’?” he asked, putting his remaining five questions on the back burner for the time being.

Theresa put her drink down and looked at Colin for a moment. “It’s a field of energy that surrounds each of us, a distilled reflection of everything we think, feel and are. It’s possible to learn quite a bit of data from aura: how his/her past has affected him/her, what he/she wants most out of life, how healthy he/she is, how happy he/she is and what his/her problems and strengths are.”

“Oh,” said Colin.

After that the date went very well and Colin listened intently to Theresa’s descriptions of aura and spiritualism. They went on for a pizza and Theresa agreed to allow Colin to her home in a taxi. He got out to open her

car door but before he could reach the pavement Theresa was half way along the path to the entrance of the block of flats where she lived.

“Goodnight Colin,” she called over her shoulder. “Thank you for a nice evening. I will telephone you tomorrow.”

Excellent, thought Colin, how sensitive of her to avoid the embarrassment of saying goodnight on the doorstep.

The next day, post housework, he called in at the golf club for his normal Saturday breakfast.

“Hello Colin,” said Sheila looking at him as he entered the bar. “What can I get you today?”

Colin stopped in his tracks. “Same as always please” he said. He glanced over to his usual table in the corner. There was no cutlery laid out.

“And that would be?” asked Sheila.

“You know what I always have,” said Colin. “And why haven’t you laid my cutlery on the corner table like always?”

“I got the feeling you didn’t like me taking you for granted. So I’m not any more.”

“But I... ,” he stuttered. “It’s Saturday.”

“And it’s the first day of me not taking you for granted. You look great in those jeans by the way.”

“But what about my breakfast?”

Steve the cook stuck his head round the kitchen door, “I can’t wait all day: full English, extra beans, and toast like always. Okay? He disappeared again.

“What would you like to drink with that?” asked Sheila.

“A large mug of tea please.”

“Take a seat,” said Sheila, “and I will bring your drink and cutlery over.”

Colin started in the direction of the corner table then diverted to one by the door but changed his mind again and settled at a table at one end of the bar.

Sheila arrived with two cups of tea and sat opposite him. “Hope you don’t mind me sitting down but I’m having my break and I’m desperate to find out how your date went.”

“It went well. Theresa’s a great talker, particularly about auras. She spotted mine straight away. She got quite enthusiastic.”

“What on earth is an aura?” asked Sheila.

“A glow around your body – like a halo she said.”

Sheila leaned forward and stared hard at Colin. “You’re not glowing at the moment.”

“You have to be tuned-in to get the best effect .”

“Have I got one?” asked Sheila.

It was Colin’s turn to stare. “I don’t think so but it’s quite bright in here and I expect they show up better in the dark.”

“What does an aura mean?” asked Sheila.

“It’s the colour that is important. She said mine was grey.”

“Grey!” exclaimed Sheila. “Grey’s not very exciting. I’d have put you down for purple at least, or even red – bright red. Grey seems a bit unfair.”

“Not really,” said Colin. “Grey is the colour of initiation. It means I’m about to burst forth. And I have innate abilities. If my grey is more silvery it means I am awakening my feminine energies.”

Steve the cook called from the bar: “I can’t do everything on my own Sheila – are you coming. There’s customers want serving.”

“Just a minute Steve I’m finishing my break.” She stood up to placate Steve. “Are you seeing this Theresa woman again Colin?”

“Yes, she’s going to arrange a séance for me to talk to my mum and dad.” He thought for a moment. “Do you think that’s a good idea Sheila?”

“If that’s what you want but personally, I’d take care. Where did you meet Theresa?”

“Around, you know.”

“Where ‘around’?”

“It doesn’t matter does it?”

“Was it a lonely hearts advert because I noticed the paper was open at that page last week when you left.”

“Might have been.”

“Oh Colin, what are you doing? You’re worth more than some spiritualist nutter from the lonely hearts pages.”

“No I’m not Sheila. Ask my ex-wife and you’ll find a nutter from the lonely hearts pages is exactly what I am worth.”

What did your wife do to you Colin, you’re a nice bloke but she seems to have knocked all the confidence out of you?”

“That’s not fair, I let her down because I don’t understand women.”

“How long were you together?”

“Three years in all.”

“Was it another man?”

“I don’t think so. You have to realise that everything was new to her. She couldn’t get a proper job for the first year because of the language problems.”

“Where was she from?”

“Russia. We met when I was on a holiday there. She worked in the hotel.”

“You married a Russian bride?”

“I know what you’re thinking but it was before all that business started with Russian women marrying so they could get to England and have a passport. We were in love.”

“Where is she now?”

“Birmingham I think.”

“I’m going to have to meet this Theresa woman and check her out for you. You’re a rotten picker of women.”

“I don’t have a lot to choose from.”

“You’re a nice bloke Colin, you should meet some of the twats I have to fend off in this place. Have you asked many nice girls?”

“What’s the point, women like you don’t give blokes like me a second glance.”

“Have you tried?”

Steve leaned through the kitchen door and slid Colin’s breakfast onto the bar. “Full English, extra beans and toast. Are the customers supposed to serve themselves today Sheila?”

“Steve, I’m coming.” She looked back at Colin as she returned to the customers. “Ask, what have you got to lose?”

Not a lot, thought Colin, only my self respect. But he made a decision to ask Sheila out when she brought his breakfast. And the moment was approaching fast as she carried his full English towards the table.

“I’ve got you another tea, okay?”

“Sheila...” he began but she held up her hand.

“When you see this Theresa I’m coming with you,” she said. “Tell her I’m your sister or something. I’m going to suss her out for you.”

And so it was that Colin was standing outside his home clutching a bunch of flowers and waiting to be collected by a sister he never knew he had to attend a séance with a woman he had only met once before. Colin made a mental note that Sheila drove into the street two minutes early: another thing to admire about her. She gave him an unusually broad smile as she leaned across to release the passenger door.

“I’m quite looking forward to this”, she said as Colin settled himself. “Shall I take those? Give you a bit more room?”

“No, I’m fine. I don’t want them rolling about in the back.”

“I see,” said Sheila as the smile dissolved. “They’re for her.”

“It seemed a good idea. This is a sort of date and I am going to her home.”

“A date? So I’m giving you a lift to a date am I?”

“I thought you were coming in for the séance part – see what it’s all about. I’m glad you’re going to be there because I’ve not done anything like this before.”

Sheila pulled away from the curb. “You do realise this woman is a bit weird don’t you?”

“Fascinating I thought.”

“No Colin, weird. You’ve got to learn to spot these odd-balls before you get involved. I’m keeping an open mind but she’s weird.”

“That’s a contradiction. You said...”

“I know what I said – concentrate on keeping those flowers nice, the ones you bought for Theresa.”

When they reached her flat, Theresa had made none of the preparations Colin expected; no candles or subdued lighting, no beaded

curtains and not a crystal ball to be seen. The session began with a cup of tea and they sat around a coffee table in the lounge.

“Thank you so much for the flowers, you see I’ve put them in water already. I’m alright with cut flowers. Shall we begin?” asked Theresa.

Colin reached forward placing his hands on the table expecting that they would have to sit with their fingers touching.

“Just relax,” said Theresa. “We will sit and talk and if someone comes to me I will pass on what they have to say.” She turned a beaming smile onto Colin’s sister. “So Sheila, tell me about your mother and father; I think Colin would like to contact them.”

Colin panicked, he knew this pretence would end in tears. “I’ll tell you about them, I’m the oldest.”

“Oh please bruv,” said Sheila, taking one of his hands in hers. “You promised I could talk to the lady, you did.”

“But you don’t know...” he began.

“A promise is a promise Colin,” said Sheila digging her nails into the back of his hand. “I’ll make it up to you. Let’s see, what pops into my mind. There was that time we went up Box Hill – you remember – and mum went giddy because it was so steep. And do you remember cousin Stephanie’s wedding when dad got so drunk we had to get a cab all the way home and the next day he went completely mad when he found out what it cost.”

Theresa interrupted. “This is not what I was looking for really. I just need feelings, issues, things that were unresolved when they passed over.”

“But I don’t understand what this will do for Colin,” said Sheila.

“He said he wanted to speak with his mother and father. I’m only trying to help.”

“And Binky if possible,” added Colin.

“I expect you’re good with dogs,” said Sheila almost under her breath.

“This will not work with your sceptical attitude. Spirits do not like animosity and anger, they shy away from negative energy.”

“I would love to talk to mum and dad again,” said Sheila, “but I can’t see it happening here.”

“Just give it a chance,” said Colin, “Let’s see what Theresa can come up with.”

“It’s not going to be our mum and dad is it Colin?”

While they talked, Theresa had slumped back in her chair and was making a strange gurgling noise in the back of her throat. Colin leaned forward with a concern on his face. “Theresa, are you okay?”

“Oh here we go,” said Sheila, looking towards the ceiling.

“I’m sorry,” said Theresa, responding to Colin shaking her arm. “That happens sometimes.” She coughed to clear her throat. “I was getting something from the other side. Someone wants to come through but there is too much negative energy.” She looked to one side as if speaking to someone close by. “Yes, yes, I understand. I’ll tell her.” She turned to Sheila, “you are upsetting the spirits, they won’t stay with so much negative energy in the room. Perhaps it’s better if Colin asks you to leave.”

“Are our mum and dad there?” asked Sheila.

“I can’t tell yet,” said Theresa. “Colin, is your sister going to stay?”

“I’ll behave,” said Sheila. “Honest bruv, I will listen to what the lady says. Let me stay.”

“What does our old dad look like?” asked Sheila. “Is he wearing that terrible blue cardigan?”

Theresa looked to her side again. “I can’t see details, just a gaseous entity.”

“Convenient”, Sheila whispered to Colin.

“Is there a small gaseous entity with them, about the size of a Jack Russell?” asked Colin.

“Is there anything you would like to ask, they can hear you.”

“Dad, is it really you?” asked Sheila. Colin looked at her, stunned by the apparent sincerity.

Theresa closed her eyes and let her head fall to one side. “He says it is really him and he wants you to relax.”

“I’ll try dad,” said Sheila, “I really will. But I have to ask you something.”

“He’s ready,” whispered Theresa.

Sheila cleared her throat and winked at Colin. “The time you bought Colin a bike”, she said, “and I couldn’t have one. I want you to forgive me for all the horrible things I said. I’m sorry.”

Theresa's head slumped over to the other shoulder, her eyes still closed. "He wants you to know that he forgives you. He knows it wasn't fair but times were hard and Colin was the oldest."

"As it happens," said Sheila with ice in her voice, "I'm two years older than Colin and we only met for the first time last year".

Theresa's body froze for a moment before the gurgling began again.

Sheila stood up. "Give it up Theresa. If you were in touch with the spirits they'd tell you we're not even related."

"Maybe we should leave her," said Colin, "she doesn't look well."

Theresa let out a low moan and her eyes flicked open. "What's happened, who are you, where am I?"

"Don't give me that old moody," said Sheila, "you know exactly where you are."

Theresa stood up. "Oh dear, for a moment there... I've just had a really bad experience, they happen sometimes. The spirits play jokes on me."

"I'm sorry about that," said Colin. "I'm sure you're only trying to help."

"Don't apologise Colin, she's a fake, it's obvious."

"How dare you," said Theresa. "I'm just trying to use my powers to help Colin. Who do you think you are coming into my home, pretending to be someone's sister when you're nobody at all?"

"At least I'm not somebody who has to put ads in lonely heart columns and pretend to be a medium to get a man interested in me."

"My powers are very important and I know I can help Colin a lot if you stop interfering. What have you ever done for him anyway?"

"What have I done? I know Colin intimately. We have breakfast together all the time and I needn't tell you what that means, or perhaps I do."

"Is she another woman Colin? I won't play second fiddle for any man. Who is she Colin?"

"I'm Colin's girlfriend, that's who," said Sheila.

"Are you?" asked Colin. "Are you really my girlfriend?"

"Of course I am. Wake up Colin, you're too slow to catch a cold you are."

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