

Spiritual Connections Episode Three: The Hokey Cokey

By

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FADE IN

EXT. MARY'S HOUSE- MORNING

A huge, creaky, rundown building. The front garden is overgrown with bushes and shrubs. A heavily vandalised black car stands amidst the undergrowth.

At the side of the front door is a plaque which reads 'Geest Hoogtes'.

INT. MARY'S HOUSE

A large, antique filled room. An old, 4x3 television stands in the corner. A bookshelf groans under the weight of the numerous copies of Mary's biography.

MARY, fifties, wearing baggy pyjamas and huge novelty slippers, heads towards the bay window, then pulls back the curtains.

She switches on the television, then turns on the gas fire, breaking wind as she bends over to do so.

INT. MARY'S KITCHEN

Old fashioned oak units adorn the walls. A Welsh dresser stands in a recess, littered with plates and yet more copies of Mary's book.

Mary wearily stomps in, heading towards the sink.

She fills the kettle, shouting upstairs at the same time.

MARY

Roy! Do you want a cuppa?

She stands in silence, waiting for a response.

MARY

Roy! Drink?

Again, she waits. Her face scowls, growing impatient.

Roy responds, his reply peppered with a Dutch twang.

ROY (O.S.)

Yes please love. I'll be down in a minute.

MARY

What about Mum, does she want one?

Mary reaches to a high cupboard, retrieving mugs.

ROY (O.S.)

She is not in her room, Mary. Her bed has not been slept in.

Mary mutters to herself.

MARY

Oh bloody Nora, not again!

She slams the mug down onto the worktop.

INT. MARY'S DINING ROOM

A table and four chairs stand in the middle. Pride of place on the chimney breast hangs a large, gold framed portrait of Mary with an angelic expression.

EDITH, eighties, wearing a floral dress, sits slumped at one of the chairs, head resting on the table. In her hand is a bottle of vodka.

The door bursts open.

MARY

Mother! Have you been in here all night again?

Edith wakes with a start. Mary notices the bottle in her grasp.

MARY (cont'd)

And you've been at my bloody vodka again, haven't you?

Edith feebly tries to hide the bottle from view.

EDITH

Oh, morning love. Must have nodded off.

MARY

This is getting all too common Mother. It's just not good enough, you know. You're becoming even more of a burden.

Edith slowly eases herself from the chair.

MARY (cont'd)
And you know vodka doesn't agree
with you... You've done it again
haven't you?

Mary touches the fabric on the seat of the chair.

MARY (cont'd)
We don't buy you Tena Ladys and
mattress protectors for nothing you
know. I'm not having it, you're
making my lovely furniture smell
like a vipers' den. Now please, go
and get yourself sorted Mother.

She snatches the bottle from Edith as she staggers past.

INT. MARY'S KITCHEN

Mary stomps back to the kettle. She pours the boiled water
into the mugs, filling one only half way.

Taking the lid from the vodka, she tops up her hot drink
with the spirit.

She hears the rattle of the letterbox.

INT. MARY'S LIVING ROOM

Mary flops down onto the sofa, mug in one hand, mail in the
other.

She takes a sip, and flicks through the letters. She stops
at one marked 'Private and Confidential'.

MARY
(Thinking out loud)
My maiden name?

An intrigued look upon her face, she rips it open.

Her face drops to a look of sheer panic. She scans the
letter again.

Her mouth drops open. She stuffs the letter in her pyjama
pocket, slapping her other hand over her gaping mouth.

Her look of panic changes instantly to one of confusion. She
sniffs her hand.

She smells it again.

Her eyes roll.

She gags and retches violently.

MARY (cont'd)
Mother, you filthy old hag!

EXT. WILMOT WELFARE CENTRE- EVENING

SAM, sixties, fumbles with a bunch of keys at the door, unaware of the small black car which comes to a standstill beside him.

He jumps as Mary slams the car door.

SAM
Mary! You're early today. I'm only just opening up. Everything alright?

MARY
Oh Sam, I had to come and see you before anyone else gets here. I'm at my wits end, dear.

SAM
That sounds a bit ominous. Well lets get in, and I'll put the kettle on, and you can tell me all about it.

MARY
Sod the kettle Sam. I need something a bit stronger.

SAM
Just for a change, eh Mary?

MARY
Don't start Sam. It just takes the edge off the day, that's all. Now unlock that bloody door, I'm freezing my paps off out here.

INT. WILMOT WELFARE CENTRE- STAFF ROOM

Mary sits in the armchair with a distressed look upon her face.

Sam enters the room with a plastic chair from the assembly room.

He plonks it down, then sits facing Mary.

She takes a swig of vodka straight from the bottle.

SAM

My God Mary, I've never seen you like this. What's happened?

MARY

There's no easy way to say this, Sam. But I'll try.

SAM

Yeah, I'm sure you will Mary.

She takes another big gulp from the bottle.

MARY

Can...Can you remember anything about the seventies, Sam?

SAM

The seventies? Yeah, like it was yesterday. Flares, sideburns, slade, babycham... It was shit really, wasn't it?

MARY

I don't mean that Sam. I mean...us.

A concerned expression slowly builds on his face.

SAM

Jesus, Mary...God, of course I can.

MARY

Well, I'm sorry to dredge up the past, I wish I didn't have to...

SAM

It's hardly dredging it up is it? It was a great night. You were brilliant!

MARY

Well, I wish I could say the same about you, dear. It was like you got your methods by listening to the hokey cokey.

SAM

I...I don't...

MARY
In, out, shake it all about.

SAM
Mary, really! Why bring it up then?
I thought you were going to tell me
of your undying love for me or
something.

MARY
Hardly, Sam. Have you looked in a
mirror recently?

Sam shakes his head disapprovingly, and stands, ready to
leave.

MARY (cont'd)
Sam! Please. Wait. I'm sorry...
It's important. I've had a letter.

SAM
A letter? About what?

MARY
Oh Sam. Don't you ever wonder why I
moved away?

SAM
Not really, why?

He places his hand on the door handle.

MARY
Because there was a bloody good
reason, that's why. How can I put
this? You...You put a bun in my
oven.

SAM
In *your* oven? I'd never been to
your house, let alone your kitchen.

MARY
Christ, Sam. Think for a minute. We
had a night of 'hokey cokey'.
Lager-fuelled, unprotected 'hokey
cokey' at that. Well dear, not only
did you deflower me that loathesome
evening, you planted your filthy
little seed in me as well... You
left me with a belly full of arms
and legs.

SAM
Are you saying that we...

MARY
Had a baby Sam, yes.

Sam raises his hands in the air, aghast.

He sits back down on the plastic chair.

SAM
And you never thought to mention
this before now?

MARY
I didn't need to. Mum moved us to
the next town, she had the baby
adopted, and that was that. Or so I
thought.

Sam struggles to speak.

SAM
So why now, Mary?

MARY
As I was saying. I've had a letter.
From the adoption agency. My
bastard offspring is trying to
contact me.

SAM
Contact *us*, you mean?

MARY
Oh, Sam. I don't know what to do.
Should I agree to a meeting or not?
It was so long ago. I didn't want
it then, so why should I want it
now? God, it'll be in its thirties
now. What would you do?

SAM
It's tricky Mary. I'll give you
that. But, at the end of the day,
its our flesh and blood. I think we
should. It's only right.

MARY
Now hang on a minute. There's no
'we' here. It's me that got the
bloody letter.

Sam stands.

He points his finger as he speaks. He raises his voice.

SAM

Now hang on a minute here. I've got just as much right as you. For heavens's sake, I didn't even know I was a father until today. I've got a bit of catching up to do as well.

MARY

Okay, calm down, dear. You'll give yourself a nose bleed.

He stops for a second.

He composes himself, lowering his voice a little.

SAM

It's just such a shock. Was it a boy or a girl, do you know?

MARY

Of course I know, you blithering idiot. I didn't force it out of my womb wearing a pissing blindfold, did I? It was a girl.

SAM

A daughter...I wonder what she looks like?

The door bursts open.

IONA, mid thirties, enters the room.

IONA

Heyup you two, how's things?

SAM

Errr. Good thanks love. How long have you been here? You didn't hear anything did you?

She steps past Sam, then sits herself down.

IONA

Just got here. Nah, I had my iPod on. Why, what have I missed?

SAM

Nothing. Nothing really.

IONA

Well you can fill me in later, if
you like?

Mary mutters to herself, barely audible.

MARY

That's how we got into this bloody
mess to begin with.

IONA

I'm sorry?

MARY

Nothing, dear. Be a sweetie, and
see if you can find me a Wagon
Wheel in the kitchen, will you?

Iona puffs her cheeks out, and slumps into the chair
slightly.

IONA

Yeah, okay. God, I'm knackered
today. I can't seem to get going.

SAM

Why, what's up love?

IONA

I'm just worn out. I was up at the
crack of dawn this morning.

MARY

Well, I hope you brushed your teeth
when you'd finished.

Iona throws a killer look to Mary. She stands, knocks past
Sam, slamming the door behind her.

MARY (cont'd)

Fat heifer. It's the parents I feel
sorry for!

SAM

Whatever you say, Mary. Look, I'm
going to have to put the chairs out
now. It's getting on a bit, the
folks will be here soon. I'll leave
you to get ready... I can't believe
I'm a dad!

MARY

No, I can't either, dear. I'm surprised you had it in you...or me, for that matter.

INT. WILMOT WELFARE CENTRE- KITCHEN

Iona searches about in the various cupboards.

She turns her head as she hears the kitchen door swing open.

JOEY, wearing ridiculously tight jeans and a wrongly buttoned up shirt enters.

IONA

Oh, hello. Joey isn't it?

JOEY

Joey with a 'J'!

She changes her tone of voice, as if addressing a child.

IONA

Okaaaay. I was just looking for some chocolate. Do you know where Gladys keeps it?

JOEY

No...Shall I ask Jack?

IONA

Who's Jack?

Joey points enthusiastically towards his head.

JOEY

My friend. He lives in my head and tells me secrets.

IONA

Oh, I bet he likes it in there. Loads of space! No, don't bother him. I bet he's busy.

JOEY

Jack says your mum is an alcoholic. What does that mean?

IONA

It means that your friend is just being silly. You can tell him that he's wrong. She's not an alcoholic at all.

JOEY

He says your other mum, silly.

IONA

Wha...What did you say?

Joey is distracted by a moth fluttering on the window. He points and laughs hysterically.

GLADYS, wearing a chintzy blouse and skirt, enters.

GLADYS

Hello Iona, love. I see you've made a new friend!

IONA

Is he all there Glad?

GLADYS

No love. He's a hamper short of a picnic. Just look at him. Looks like he was dressed by David Blunkett, the poor sod.

IONA

He just said something really weird to me, Gladys. It freaked me out a bit.

GLADYS

Welcome to my world Iona. He doesn't know what he's on about half the time. Wouldn't know his bell-end from his elbow, that one.

INT. WILMOT WELFARE CENTRE- ASSEMBLY ROOM- LATER

The guests are tightly packed into the hall.

Gladys and Joey sit at the rear of the room.

Sam and Iona are just finishing off welcoming the audience.

SAM

So, ladies and Gents, without further ado, I'd like you to give a big, warm welcome to Mary Van Fantoome.

The crowd begin their rapturous applause as Mary enters.

Gladys looks towards Joey- the only person not joining in. She elbows him, as he ferrets around with his hand down his trousers.

GLADYS

Clap!

JOEY

No, it's just itching.

Mary beams at the audience.

MARY

Good evening everybody. It's lovely to see you all again. Now, if we can have a little bit of hush, and I'll get the ball rolling.

The crowd quieten down, as they settle in their seats.

Sam lowers the lights slightly.

Mary's heavy breathing begins.

MARY (cont'd)

Oooh. High flier alert! Someone's just climbed a rung of the ladder. Somebody's had a promotion! Who's just moved up in the workplace?

A few hands are raised into the air.

MARY (cont'd)

We've got a brainy bunch in tonight, haven't we? Now let's see what else the spirits are telling me.

(Beat)

Someone in marketing. Started out as just a temp?

Hands are lowered, leaving just THERESA, pretty, early twenties, blonde hair, with her hand raised.

MARY (cont'd)

Is this you, my love?

THERESA

Yes. I think so. I've just had a promotion. Last week, actually.

MARY

That's wonderful news, dear. Your boyfriend must be so proud, now that you've got your own office and a lovely car and everything?

THERESA

Yes, he is.

MARY

Is that your boyfriend sat next to you?

Mary points towards GRAHAM, early twenties, who blushes at the attention.

THERESA

Yes it is. Well, he's my fiance actually.

MARY

Oh. He popped the question at last! You'd been waiting a while, hadn't you, they're telling me?

THERESA

Yeah, you could say that. We've been seeing each other since school.

MARY

Aah, lovely. High school sweethearts, ladies and gentlemen. And he's only just proposed? Well, it's about time! I'm sure your huge salary increase had nothing to do with his decision.

Sam leans towards Mary, speaking in hushed tones.

SAM

Mary! Think a little before you speak, eh?

Mary carries on, oblivious.

THERESA

I hope not.

MARY

Only jesting dear. Now, this company. You've been there just over a year, is that right?

THERESA

Yeah, it was a year in September.

MARY

Well, congratulations on doing so well in such a short space of time. You must be good!

THERESA

Thank you. I think I deserved it though.

MARY

Yes. Yes you did, you've been really hard at it. I don't know if I'd risk losing my gag-reflex just to get my own office, but each to their own.

Theresa gasps.

THERESA

I beg your pardon?

MARY

And I can never understand a mans fixation with that other thing you've been doing just to get a raise. Why they want to go up the dirt track when they've got a perfectly good motorway round the other side, I'll never know.

THERESA

How dare you!!

MARY

And your poor fiance. You don't let him anywhere near it.

Graham bursts into tears. He leaps from his seat.

GRAHAM

Theresa, how could you? You work for my dad!

He leaves the room in a flurry, as Theresa struggles to her feet and follows. The audience whisper between themselves.

MARY

Oh, never short of excitement here, are we folks?

Mary takes a moment. Then stares into space, breathing deeply. The crowd grows silent.

MARY (cont'd)

Now, I've got someone. She's got a message for someone that's deeply troubled at the moment. She's about fifty or so. Quite fat. I'm getting a name...Rose. Does anyone follow?

ROGER, late thirties, spotty, unkempt hair, raises his hand from the back of the room.

MARY (cont'd)

Yes, dear. You know who Rose is? You'll have to speak up so I can hear you up here.

ROGER

My mum's name was Rose.

MARY

Are you out of work at the moment, my love?

ROGER

Yeah. I'm looking though.

MARY

I'm sure you are. This must be for you then dear. Do you live alone?

ROGER

Yeah, I've got a flat.

MARY

And you're unhappy at the moment, she's telling me dear.

ROGER

Yeah, I s'pose.

MARY

Now, you live on your own, but you've got your eye on a certain somebody, haven't you?

He laughs.

ROGER

Yeah.

MARY

And that's the problem dear. You think the world of this girl, but she doesn't even know you exist, does she?

Roger nods his head in agreement.

MARY (cont'd)

Now, your mum's saying that she knows how much you like this girl, but it's not going to work out, is it? A relationship is a two way street. But this...

Mary shakes her head.

MARY (cont'd)

It's pretty much one way, do you understand? It can only hurt you, when someone doesn't even notice you, you know. I think you'd be a lot better off forgetting about her, and think about changing your routine a little.

Roger forces a half smile.

MARY (cont'd)

You need to move on. Forget about wondering about her every move. Get a life and get out more. Do new things, because it can't carry on like this dear. It's not healthy, is it?...And it's only a matter of time until the police catch you up that tree with your binoculars in one hand, and your crimson acorn in the other.

Roger stands, making a hasty retreat.

Mary shouts out to him as he heads through the door.

MARY (cont'd)

Or at least wait until she's sixteen!

Mary turns her back to the crowd, then produces a tiny bottle of vodka from her pocket. Undiscreetly, she takes a swig.

She faces the audience again.

MARY (cont'd)
 Ooh, now this a strange one. Let me try. Is there someone here called Karl?

She scans the sea of faces.

MARY (cont'd)
 I'm getting Karl. Anybody?

No reactions.

MARY (cont'd)
 Hot Karl? I don't understand. Does 'hot Karl' mean anything to anyone? I'm being drawn to you, my darling.

She smiles sweetly at ANDY, forties, bald head and glasses.

MARY (cont'd)
 Now dear. This hot Karl business, does that ring a bell with you?

ANDY
 Well yes, it does. It's not really something I want to go into details about here though, if you don't mind.

MARY
 Don't worry dear. We'll skirt around it. Just tell me as much as you're comfortable with.

ANDY
 Err. Okay, if you're sure. Can't you just wait until you get home and Google it?

She responds sharply.

MARY
 No! They're giving me a few details. Just nod along if I'm heading in the right direction, dear.

He slouches heavily into his seat.

ANDY
 Oh, God! Okay.

MARY

Right, they're telling me that you're happily married dear?

ANDY

Yes I am. Nearly twenty years in December.

MARY

That's lovely, dear. Now, you got a bit of an interesting hobby that you and wifey get up to, is that right?

Andy nods, biting his lip.

MARY (cont'd)

And that's the hot Karl? Oh, I'm struggling here dear. Right, it started out as a bit of fun using a glass coffee table, yes?

Again, Andy agrees as he nervously eyes the crowd.

MARY (cont'd)

And as you both got more comfortable with each other, you progressed to cling film, and then the next thing you know, you're at it bareback!

Andy drops his head to look at his feet.

MARY (cont'd)

Ah! I get it now. It is a strange pastime, dear. I must ask, are you the Karler or the Karlee?

Andy stands, ready to leave.

MARY (cont'd)

Isn't it daunting seeing that big brown eye staring down at you?

Andy is already at the door.

MARY (cont'd)

Brings a whole new meaning to the term 'getting shitfaced'!

A large number of the audience gag and retch.

Sam stands, whispering in Mary's ear.

SAM

Mary please. That's going too far.
There's youngsters in the audience.

MARY

Sam please, sit down. I can't help
what information they give me. I'm
not the social deviant. You can't
wrap kids up in cotton wool, you
know.

EXT. WILMOT WELFARE CENTRE

Roger strides confidently down the driveway towards Mary's
car, passing Andy on the way.

He stands beside the driver's side door, looks left and
right, then eases down his flies.

His expression changes to a look of agony, until he finally
begins to urinate.

Hearing a noise in the nearby bushes, Roger ducks down,
still passing water. His head pops back up several seconds
later.

He smiles to himself, pulls up his zip and flees at speed.

INT. MARY'S HALLWAY

Edith stands at the foot of the stairs. In her hand is a
bottle of vodka.

She shouts towards the living room door.

EDITH

Roy! Roy! I'm off up to my bed,
love.

Roy responds, from the room behind the closed door.

ROY (O.S.)

Okay, my love. Don't forget to
switch your electric blanket off
before you go to sleep, will you?
Don't want you tripping out the
fuse box again.

Edith contorts her wizened face, and flicks two fingers
towards the living room door.

She screws the lid from the bottle, and takes a large gulp.

ROY (O.S.) (cont'd)
Night love.

EDITH
(Under her breath)
Piss off!

She steadily and shakily ascends the stairs, passing wind on every other step.

INT. WILMOT WELFARE CENTRE- ASSEMBLY ROOM

A large number of the seats are now empty. Mary is still addressing the audience.

MARY
...And if you want to lose that reputation, you might want to think about losing the car, dear. We used to call the Capri the reverse hedgehog, back in the day. You know why, dear? Because with a Capri, the pricks are on the inside. God bless.

The remaining crowd giggle between themselves. Even Sam breaks into a smile.

Mary clears her throat.

MARY (cont'd)
Okay, we'll press on. Who's just had a puppy?

JENNY, late teens, enthusiastically thrusts her hand into the air.

MARY (cont'd)
Oh, hello, my darling. You've had a new puppy have you?

JENNY
Yeah, he's a...

MARY
Don't tell me dear. I'll tell you. That's my job. Then we can be sure this message is for you, can't we?

Jenny looks excited and fidgets in her chair.

MARY (cont'd)

Now, this little puppy. Aah! It's tiny. It won't be though. They're telling me that it's a big breed. It's black and ginger. It's an Alsatian, isn't it, dear?

JENNY

No, German Shepherd.

MARY

It's the same thing dear. Didn't they teach you anything at school?

Jenny giggles to herself.

MARY (cont'd)

Right, this little dog is going to be a great friend for you. They don't call them man's best friend for nothing, you know. Was he a present, dear?

JENNY

Yeah, my mum and dad got him for me, like.

MARY

Yes! That's right. They wanted to show you how happy they were that you were getting better.

Jenny smiles, looking proud of herself.

JENNY

Now, you've not been well for a while, have you dear? You're through the worst of it now though, they're telling me.

A nod of agreement from Jenny.

MARY

Yes, you can forget about all those dark times now. A funny thing the human mind isn't it? I bet it seems silly to you now, doesn't it? I mean, think about it, what good can scribbling all over your body with a razor blade do, if you're honest?

Jenny listens on, unsure how to react.

MARY (cont'd)

I bet your body looks like an organic Scalextric track, doesn't it? Well, they're telling me to tell you not to worry any more. The scars will fade over time. Just remember not to go on a sunbed, or you'll end up looking like a pink map of the London underground. That's all my dear. Look after that little dog, won't you?

Jenny nods, self-consciously.

IONA

Right. I think we'd better leave it there tonight, folks. Just time for the raffle.

MARY

Well I'll be off dears. Things to do...

IONA

...vodka to drink.

Mary scowls, as she pushes past Iona.

INT. WILMOT WELFARE CENTRE- STAFF ROOM

Mary switches on the light, then picks up her bag from upon the chair.

She reaches inside, taking out her mobile phone.

She dials a number.

MARY

Roy, it's me. Is Mum in bed yet?

(beat)

Good. Do me a favour, and bring that old coffee table in from the garage, will you. I've got a little game for us to play tonight.

FADE OUT