

22 - PENNIES FROM

HEAVEN

Before my wife died, she thought the spirit world was “a bunch of shit.” I did not share her opinion. Despite her lack of confidence in the spirit world, she was a fan of television shows about hauntings, ghosts, and communicating with deceased loved ones. Jokingly, I would instruct any spirits around us to mess with her. I was a believer and she needed convincing. We promised if something ever happened to one of us, the other would seek out a medium to try to connect to the beyond. We even had a code word to use to make sure it was legit.

Soon after she passed, I began my search for a medium to settle the dispute over who was right. She liked to be right, and usually was. The belief that loved ones merely transition to another plane when they die is not shared by everyone. My own opinion centered on the idea that there were elements of the universe which human beings were unable to comprehend. Remaining open to the existence of the spirit world was never a stretch for me.

If you are in the “bunch of shit” camp, this is for you.

Moving Through

244

My first attempt to connect was at the end of February during a group reading with a medium. Colby Rebel is a nationally recognized medium and she made an appearance at The Venue in Orlando. I went in with an open mind and had no expectations about what, if anything, I would walk away with. My hope was to find out if she was at peace and okay.

Colby performed 8 or 9 readings during the hour and a half group reading session that night. I figured if there were ever a place for

her to come through, this would be it. I asked my friend Helen to go with me for moral support. Whether or not she came through, it was nice to be out of the house and spending time with a dear friend. We settled in and the group readings began.

The fourth reading of the night began with a mention of a sister figure or best friend stepping forward. I thought nothing of it. Then she began to mention things that got my attention. Cancer. Fund raiser. Stubborn. Fighter. Dancing. Promises. The lady in front of me thought it was a friend of hers and claimed it. As the medium kept sharing, she stopped talking to the lady and pointed in my direction and asked if any of this made sense to me. I was floored. My friend realized it was her well before it registered for me. I raised my hand, took the mic, and said I understood.

I spoke few words other than to validate what she was saying. At one point the medium just stopped and said “okay, okay, okay” while pacing. My wife was a persistent woman and was in overdrive. I had to laugh. She described her as compassionate, kind, loving, and someone who was always there for people.

Nailed it.

Pennies from Heaven

245

She described our relationship as inseparable and close. I told her she was my wife. Remember how adamant she was about me keeping my promises to her? The medium mentioned it four times. Message received. Through her I was able to connect and get the message thanking me for never leaving her side and for always being there for her.

As the medium was wrapping up, she mentioned a signature or handwriting and asked if that made sense to me. I confirmed the

tattoo of her handwriting on my arm. I was wearing a long sleeve shirt and got it a month after she passed. It was the words “Moving Though...” which I copied from her list of possible titles for her show.

Mediums tend to pace and gesture while someone is coming through. At the end of the reading, she walked to the end of the stage and stood still. The words “I love you” came out of her mouth. I got goose bumps.

When she finished, I texted the keywords to my phone to remember what just happened. I stared at the floor for a moment and then looked at my friend. On the table was a penny. Neither of us placed it there. Our phones were the only items on the table that night. Without question. The penny was not there. Then it was. No explanation.

It was an amazing night. Whether or not you believe in the spirit world, there is no disputing our loved ones are with us. On the way home, I opened a Spotify playlist and hit shuffle. The first seven songs that played all meant something to us. I turned off the music

Moving Through

246

because it was too much. Persistent wife strikes again. I laughed and said out loud “Okay, I got it. I can only handle so much Yvette.” In the days after her death, I began finding pennies in strange places. I mentioned it to my hair stylist, and she was shocked to learn I had never heard of the “pennies from heaven” phenomenon. Every penny found was heads up. I was intrigued. There is no scientific explanation for how a penny can materialize and appear out of the blue. In the spirit world, pennies, or sometimes dimes, are a sign someone is trying to communicate with you. Finding

them outside of the ordinary places one would expect to find a penny gets our attention.

Mission accomplished. Opening the refrigerator and seeing one on the bottom shelf got my attention. Glancing at an empty dining room table one moment and finding two pennies at the places where we used to sit had my attention. The shower shelf, dashboard of my car, and in the bathtub of the guest bath all were noticed. Explaining the penny scourge to my youngest was met with a “why doesn’t she leave hundreds?” Comedy heals.

The most memorable penny story happened when we decided to sell her car. My son was not old enough to drive and our driveway space was limited. We posted it for sale and the phone rang an hour later. It was an uncle inquiring about the car. He shared that his nephew lost his father to cancer when he was twelve. This even got Dawn’s attention. She also lost a parent at the age of twelve. What would Yvette do? I agreed to sell it for less than it was listed to work within their budget. When they arrived for the test drive, the car was completely cleared out. The young man took it for a spin and Pennies from Heaven

247

returned without incident. He exited the car and I waited for him to get the cash out of his car.

Feeling nostalgic, I took one last look inside and saw a penny on the center console. My heart skipped. I tried to get Dawn’s attention to confirm what I was seeing. The way I tried to casually ask her to come look at something alarmed the young couple. They were afraid something was wrong with the car. No. Everything was right. Message received.

A month later, I attended a private reading with medium in

Orlando. My meeting with Heidi Jaffe was scheduled a few weeks after she died. My decision to keep the appointment, despite hearing her come through at the group reading, was wise. The private reading brought more than I ever expected in the way of healing and messages from beyond. She began with an explanation of how spirit spoke to her. Then took a deep breath and began counting. One. Two. Three. Four. Five. Six. Seven. Seven? Seven of my deceased family stepped forward. Three from the maternal side on her right, three from the paternal side on her left, and one very loud spirit who was next to me on the couch. She began with the maternal side. My great grandmother, who suffered from Alzheimer's disease, my grandmother, and grandfather. She identified them by first name. Mary, Eleanor, and John. Their message was about forgiveness and healing. On the paternal side, my stepmom, who died from cancer a day before Yvette had her double mastectomy, came through. My dad's brother and his wife who both passed from cancer also came through. Again, she identified their initials.

Moving Through

248

Then she got around to the "insistent" female energy next to me. I knew it was Yvette. She was eerily specific about every detail. The message was much more personal than the group reading. I was thanked for staying by her side and for taking care of her. She described her eyes and her shock about how quickly everything unraveled. Cancer. Sepsis. All spot on.

The medium told me Yvette communicates with pennies and music. Bingo. Pennies? I almost fell off the couch. Heidi also said "Some who passed on will send people to those left behind. She is

saying she could have been mean and sent someone exactly like her, but instead she sent you someone who was a little less chaotic. Does this make sense?"

"Yes."

The exact wording was important here. This validated my suspicion she may have had something to do with the unexpected new person appearing in my life. Message received.

My third experience was another group reading with Colby Rebel a year after the second reading with Heidi. The Venue was again the location. I took Dawn with me this time. Date night for the bereft. The attendance was larger than the first group reading so I my expectations were low about hearing from Yvette again.

Truthfully, I hoped Dawn's father would come through. He was a veteran and police officer who was killed in a car accident during a police chase when she was twelve.

Sure as shit, the fourth reading began with the mention of a "strong sister energy" coming forward. I knew it was her. The wording was Pennies from Heaven

249

exactly how she described her the last time. I knew. Unbeknownst to me, a woman she worked with was recording the reading from the front row. First up was the mention of two rings. The recording is something I listened to many times.

"Do two rings make sense? Or double rings?"

"Yes."

Before we left the house, I pulled out two rings Yvette had given me. I asked Dawn which one went better with my outfit.

What followed was a humorous exchange. By this time the microphone was in my hands.

She continued and then paused saying:

“Oh. No. I can’t just say that. I will say it exactly as I heard it so you will have to forgive me.”

I said, “Go ahead, just say it.”

Laughter.

“Would you understand her thinking she is smarter than you?”

“Yes”

“Ok. And that when she was right about an argument you never heard the end of it.”

“Yes.”

“She just loved to rub that in.”

“Yes.”

“She is also giving me something about her feet, I don’t know if it is her feet or your feet. Do one of you have big ole feet?”

“Yes. That would be me.”

Laughter.

Moving Through

250

“And you would make her rub those feet or something like that?

Is that right?”

“Yes.”

“She wasn’t a fond person of feet, but she rubbed them because she loves you. She also understands, she makes me feel like she is ill before she

passes or a sense of cancer. Is that correct?”

“Yep.”

“Also, it is so weird because did it go down her back? Or something? She makes me feel like it went all the way down my spine. She

makes me feel like her body was not functioning. I think her speech got slurred. Or something with her mouth as well. Her mouth was lopsided toward the end. Do you understand what I am referring to?"

"Yeah."

"Okay. I think that there's dribble coming out and she wants to thank you for cleaning up the dribble. I just don't think you left her side and just feel like you were constantly there, and she needed strong medical

care. Again, I think she is slipping into a coma. And I am not sure so you can correct me if I am wrong but I feel like you are kind of almost shouting

or in a panic to tell them to "Give her more medicine give her more medicine!" but you did not realize she could hear you. She wants you to know she could hear you. And she is like "well you don't even know what

she was saying about the medicine but there were a few choice words coming out of her mind as to give me that medicine as well. And so, I feel

like she keeps saying thank you thank you thank you. You kissed, it's weird, normally I see a kiss on the cheek, this one is weird, but I see a kiss

on the eyelids or right up here. She knows you did that. So, at that point she is letting you know that was her goodbye. Either she had just passed she is showing me from above you. She is letting me know to thank you for

Pennies from Heaven

251

it. I don't think you like all her family people and she wants to thank you for being patient with them and for connecting with them and talking with

them. She just lets me know thanks for putting up with them. I just feel

like too Easter feels to be important. Easter is on the 21st, either the month

of April or the 21st?"

"No but we were always together for Easter." "Ok. She loved to play games with you and mess with your head. I think it was a joyful thing.

Tapping into her is passive aggressive sadistic but she really enjoyed it.

Um. She was up for her she calls it friendly banter. She put preparation H

places it should not be just because she thought it was funny like she has

that kind of sense of humor."

"She put it on her face."

Laughter.

"See there you go. I know she steps forward tonight because it has been coming up a lot for you and it has been a little hard for you to move

forward. It is like you get there and get there and go back a few steps. It is

like you get there and get there and go back a few steps. I feel like she wanted to come forward to give you a big ole shove to say "hey it's time.

You've got this, stop falling back. It's time to move forward." Oh, she is bringing you love again just so you know so she is letting you know she is

bringing you love again. "She is really resistant to it." I am just listening to her right. "She is really resistant to it. She is like I don't know; I don't know. She is like no, I am winning this argument. You'll see." She wants to thank you for showing her love, for showing her kindness, and compassion. She wants to thank you for being there. She never thought in

her whole life that someone would really keep their word. And you did.

Every step of the way. She said I just want to thank you for the greatest love of my life. And I will leave that with you.”

Moving Through

252

Wow. Again, message received. Every detail was on point. Hearing about the lopsided mouth brought me to tears. Thinking about what she looked like after she passed always does. Despite the reminder of her suffering, hearing from her brought healing. The words chosen by Colby were eerily accurate. The word shove was deliberate. She was the one person who always knew when I needed a shove. Her timing was flawless as usual.

After the previous two readings, I was surprised she came through. My surprise gave way to gratitude for the perfectly timed shove along the healing journey. I take special joy in knowing every time she came through, her own “bunch of shit” theory was debunked and was an admission that she was wrong. Side note: Dawn’s father did come through two readings later. We went two for two on date night. However, that is her story to tell.

Preparing to get remarried was exciting, but also an emotional rollercoaster. I deferred to the promises I made when the emotions were heavy. Her wish for me was nothing but happiness, even if she was not here in the physical world any longer. Three weeks prior to the last reading, my best friend from childhood, Andrea, gave the first toast at our wedding.

“I met Dawn nearly 40 years ago, when we were starting third grade. Throughout our angelic childhood, we forged an everlasting friendship that I know will stand the test of time. Okay Mr. Redmon, maybe angelic isn’t quite the right word. Looking back, Dawn was fearless even as a kid (me, not so much.) So when

she switched teams at the top of the fourth inning, I applauded her
Pennies from Heaven

253

fearlessness. A couple years later, I was honored to witness two beautiful souls come together to become one. My heart broke in two when a short time later, one of those beautiful souls grew her angel wings. Today I have the privilege to be here with all of you to witness the start of a wonderful adventure that she so deserves with her new wife, as once again two beautiful souls become one. Dawn 2, I believe in my heart, and knew the day I met you, that you were handpicked by that angel, and I thank her for sending you! My friend has found her soulmate not once, but twice in this lifetime. As you head into the top of the 5th, I cannot imagine a more perfect love than what you two share. May your game go into extra innings!"

Perfect.

Her presence is confirmed by many who were connected to her. The pennies continue to appear in random locations, but are always perfectly timed. My last trip to the Venue was no exception. Two days before it closed its doors, Dawn and I went to one last show in the space where Yvette worked, played, and felt at home. At the end of the show, there was a penny in a wall mounted candle holder. It was not there when we arrived. Seeing the shiny, 2019, heads up coin was a testament to the beauty of endings and the reminder that with every ending a new beginning is possible.