



# UNWANTED MESSAGE

When the Spirit Moves... Something Else.

There's nothing supernatural about modern devices. They are the prospect of science, not superstition. After all, superstition is just there to help us cope with what we can't understand. And everyone knows how you use a smartphone, right?

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I was looking at the cabinets and the floor with a mixture of anxiety and distress. It didn't seem to be in the plants by the windows. I stopped to take in their fragrant odor... and instantly forgot what I was looking for. Ah, yes, the phone. My smartphone was laying on the kitchen counter. I was always putting it in one place or another. I could never find it when I needed it. The only reason why I could find it now was because my message ringtone was going off.

I reached for the phone and then it moved. I don't mean it I bumped it and it slid out of my grasp. And it didn't jump around (the phone wasn't on vibrate.) No, I mean it slid across the table like it was being attracted to a large magnet. I reached for it again and it slid further away. On the third try, it fell off the table, right onto the floor. If the screen was broken, I was going to be most put out.

I trapped it under my foot. But even then, it shook, as if trying to escape the clutches of my weak arches. If this was all part of the phone trying to user train me, I was going to write the manufacturer a stern letter. I picked the unit up and worked my way past the password screen. It was a note from my mother. She'd been ill and in the hospital. Since she was out-of-state, I couldn't go and visit, so I'd been keeping her company with daily late-morning phone calls. They were our little secret, no one else knew about them, not even the nursing staff at the hospital. Her message read: "Won't be able to make our call today."

I started to write a reply, asking what was up when a second message from my mother arrived on the phone. "Sorry." Mother was always apologizing when it wasn't her fault. That was mom all over. As I went back to typing in my question, a message from my aunt popped up on the screen.

"I have terrible news," my aunt wrote, "I just got it from the hospital."

My hands stopped typing immediately. Fingers simply held the phone. I was at a loss for what to do next. Those three little dots danced across the screen indicating someone was sending a message. I waited. Finally, the message appeared. "Your mother passed away last night."