

# EVENING ALONE

*by* Ramon Collins

Sharon arrived at an overcast beach to the squawks and swoops of seagulls. One settled on the nearby seawall.

She glanced sideways. "Do you have Christmas mornings and birthday parties?"

The gull strutted a few steps down the wall.

"Please don't go away. Stay and talk," Sharon said. The gull stood on one leg and cocked its head toward her. She rubbed a knuckle under her eye.

"I need your advice."

The gull put its foot down, stretched its wings out and swept into the salty breeze. Sharon stood, crossed the esplanade and stopped at the water's edge.

"Do you have Christmas mornings and birthday parties?" she asked an incoming wave. It turned and swirled back as she walked away.

Darkening clouds broke now and the setting sun peeked over the horizon like a half-drowned orange.

In the wet sand, light glinted off a gold ring.

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