



An everyday kiss-and-tell tale of country folk

I MUST admit I've been gripped for weeks by the illicit-lurve saga of Brian Aldridge and Siobhan Hathaway. Who'd have thought *The Archers* could come up with such dizzy-making passion, such head-spinning intrigue, such a seething whirlpool of infidelity, concealment, discovery (Oh no! The earrings! Aarrggh!), confrontation, screaming matches, sulks, fuming husband, Who-is-he-you-bitch-I-just-want-the-name rows, mis-identification of lover, blissfully ignorant wife, imminent holiday...? It's getting like Dostoevsky out there in rural Borssetshire.

What makes it so listenable is the presence of Caroline Lennon as Siobhan, the doctor's errant wife. Ms Lennon's sexy voice, that hint of nymphomaniacal urgency about her conversation, has, I'm sure, had car drivers mounting the pavement all over the nation. She manages to sound intelligent, attractive, flighty, desperate and self-destructive all at the same time. She even manages to bring out a convincing beast in the snooty and bloodless Brian. I pictured her as a more minxy version of Dervla Kirwan, but I was sure that, by the law of likelihoods, the real-life Ms Lennon would never match my imagination. Amazingly, she turns out (*see left*) to be an absolute dreamboat.

There's only one problem with their affair: the fact that no radio technician has ever managed to convey two people enjoying a passionate kiss by sound alone. The true sound of a real-life snog is dead silence, but that would never do. So Brian and Siobhan have to punctuate their embraces with gasps and little kissy noises that are inappropriate.

One listener, on the BBC's *Archers* website, asks how the kissing "sound effects" are created. Brian (Charles Collingwood) replies: "They are made by kissing each other, and in this case, Caroline and I kiss each other, but not silently!" He sounds understandably smug, the lucky old goat.