

Sorrows Know How to Swim

by Jake Barnes

She packed up her stuff and left. Gone to make whoopee with her boy toy. He shrugged. Goodbye and good riddance, he said, but that's not what he felt.

She had left some stuff. A book or two. A bottle of Vermouth. He had no use for that. He checked the medicine chest in the upstairs bathroom and found that she had left her toothbrush. He tossed it in the trash. He had no use for that, either.

That night he dreamed about a duel with toothbrushes, she with her lavender one, he with his white. She wielded her weapon like a cudgel. She beat him black and blue. She chased him out of the house and he ran down the street screeching "Help! Help!"

In the morning he searched every closet and drawer in the house and put what he found, including the toothbrush, into a black plastic sack and dumped into the garbage.

The only thing he kept was the Vermouth. He went to the liquor store and bought a bottle of gin, and that night before bed, he had more than a few martinis and slept like a baby.

