

The Shrink

by Jake Barnes

“What's the matter with you?” he asked. I was sitting across the desk from him in his office. The sun was shining in my eyes, and I couldn't see him clearly.

I was sad, I said. “Aren't we all?” he replied. He leaned forward and scribbled my name on a list.

One day he made me stay after the session. He told one of the women in the group to stay too. “Why don't you two get together?” he asked. The woman blushed and shook her head. “I don't think so,” she said. I stood there looking at my shoes.

The next session I sat in the doctor's office and told him my whole story, how my girlfriend had run off with a Berkeley student and his wife. Now all three of them were living together. I was curious about what they did in bed. Did they do it in pairs or all at the same time?

When I finished I paused. The doctor looked up. The sun through the window made the ends of his wild hair gleam. His glasses flashed. “What?” he said. “Sorry. I wasn't listening.”

