

# Men Are Beasts

*by* Jake Barnes

They both have an annoying habit. She talks to him while she's in another room, and he doesn't answer because he can't hear what she's saying. This drives him crazy. She complains that when she speaks to him, he doesn't listen. "Will you take out the garbage?" she asks. "What?" he replies. He says he doesn't hear well. She is convinced that he doesn't care what she has to say.

One day he is in the TV room, and his wife is in the kitchen, and she asks him a question, and he yells, "What?" She appears in the kitchen door, her hands on her hips, and yells back, "You never listen to me!"

Okay. A compromise is in order. This can't go on, they agree. He gets his hearing tested, and consequently in a week or two, he is wearing hearing aids. He is happy, his wife is happy, and everything is wonderful in their little world. Now when she speaks to him, he no longer responds with an interrogative but rather a cheery, "You're absolutely right, dear" or "I'll get right on it," or "What a great idea!"

On her part, she still talks to him from other rooms, sometimes when she is in the bathroom or the garage, or when she is in her car on the way to work or at the grocery store, and when he doesn't answer, it makes her sad. That's the way men are, she thinks. You just can't change them.

