

Sad Songs

by Jake Barnes

She spent half her time in the hospital with a bad back. The other half she was in her shrink's office.

Once she made me go with her when she went to see the psychiatrist. "He doesn't love me," she told the shrink. "Oh, of course he does," said the learned man. They both looked at me. I looked at my shoes and didn't say anything.

She was thrilled when she learned that her best friend was having an affair. She left her husband and ran off with a high school history teacher, my wife reported. The woman and her husband were our best friends. That evening my wife called the husband to see how he was doing. Okay, he said. He had called the history teacher's wife and asked her over for dinner, he said. She had accepted.

I shook my head. "That Ken," I said. "He's an enterprising sucker!"

My wife made calls to everybody she knew that evening while I sat in our den and listened to jazz tunes, sad songs like "Nardis" and "I'll remember you."

