

Three Micros

by Jake Barnes

Not a Good Sign

He got the results of the biopsy that afternoon. When his wife got home from work that evening, he told her what the doctor had said. He also told his wife about the old couple that he had seen at the clinic. He had gone outside to get a cup of coffee at the kiosk by the hospital, and on his way back to the medical office building, they were going in the door just ahead of him. The old woman walked with the help of a cane, and the old man was wearing gardening gloves.

Mismatch

She was a woman of principle. I admired that. She believed in never denying sex to her man. I was dismayed by her pouts and temper tantrums, but all in all I fondly remember our time together. Marriage was never in the cards, of course. One year I asked her what she wanted for Christmas, and she said a diamond. I gave her diamond earrings.

The Secret Garden

They couple with abandon, like Adam and Eve, old lovers made new by invention in a garden of memories. She whispers stories to him. True? False? Who knows, who cares? Neither of them are children; they both have pasts. What matters is that the stories work. The earth moves. And then he has an idea. Why not share her talent for choreography? Why not invite one of her lady friends to the party? She says she will think about it. One day he brings her a fig leaf and an apple. "Here," he says. "Props."

