

Part 6

Read a short story titled *Margaret and the Two-Inch Tomato*.

Answer questions 27 to 33 based on the story.

- 1 Margaret has a black thumb. She has never been able to successfully grow anything. She has experimented in all manner of cuttings and they blossom for a day or two, then wither and die. Nothing happens to the seeds that she plants. They don't even break the ground. Her house plants are all destroyed, torn by her outdoor loving cats. They hang bedraggled and limp, with broken branches and dying leaves. 5
- 2 Every year, she tries to plant the live Christmas tree she buys. Every year it dies.
- 3 One spring, Margaret spots a whole garden full of beautiful red, beefy tomatoes just across the street. It is her neighbour's and she is envious. If her neighbour is able to grow those lovely fruit/vegetables, why can't she? Judging by her intelligence and being not totally incompetent, the chances of her succeeding would be favourable. Besides, the soil is the same on this side of the street as it is on that. She's sure to be able to grow some freaking tomatoes. 10
- 4 Burned in the past, Margaret knows better than to buy seeds. She buys tomato plants in special pots that guarantee they'll grow. The tomato plants are already six inches tall in the cardboard pots. The soil they are planted in is dark and marled with special ingredients. She plants them on the same side of her yard that her neighbour planted his. He is outside weeding. She waves and he waves back. "I'm growing tomatoes," she shouts. 15
- 5 He smiles and replies, "Takes some of mine. I have too many."
- 6 "Braggart," she thinks. But she laughs and continues planting her tomatoes.
- 7 The drought starts as soon as she finishes putting the very last tomato plant in the ground. It is the worst droughts the southeaster has ever experienced; weeks go by without even a single drop of rain. Water levels in reservoirs are slowly going down and even drinking water dries up. No one is permitted to water their gardens and it is deemed a criminal offence to wash your car. Margaret stares, distraught, at the sticks where her tomato plants used to be. In the beginning, she tries to keep up with the watering. Overflow from showers are saved up and used sparingly. She places a pail in the bathtub makes everyone in her family produce water after each bath. But the plants are so dry from the record-setting heat that she knows the effort is futile. 25
- 8 Just when she has given up and intends to remove those miserable looking bare sticks and start over, it begins to rain. From drought to monsoon in one easy session. Every day, she returns home, struggles clumsily to open her umbrella, drags her briefcase inside and bolts down the hatches for the evening. Water seeps into her shoes. Her roof is leaking. Her car is leaking. It is so wet outside, the cats don't even bother to rush the door. She forgets she ever gardened. 30
- 9 Finally, it stops raining. There is a beautiful sunrise. The world looks bright, energetic and beautiful. In the afternoon, she returns home from work and gets out of her car, grateful that she doesn't have to deal with that burdensome umbrella. Something catches her eyes as she is stepping into the house, a flash of red. 35
- 10 A plant has grown and blossomed, covered with leaves, and on it hangs a beautiful red waxed fruit. A perfect two-inch tomato decorating the green foliage. She moves closer to the plant and bends forward to stare at the flawless fruit.
- 11 Days go by and it seems not have grown in size, still remaining at its perfect two-inch size. But it is spectacular. Fearful that it will start decaying, she reluctantly plucks the tomato and brings it inside. Her first home-grown anything. 40

- 12 Margaret wonders if there is any way to preserve the tomato. She still keeps the first dollar bill she ever made. This could be a decorative item just like the dollar bill. However, her search on the Internet about permanently preserving fruits or vegetables were futile. During dinner, she cuts the tomato into tiny, perfect wedges and decorates a salad with them. "Do you see that?" she asks her husband. 45
- 13 "Oh, great, you grew a tomato," he answers
- 14 "If I can grow a tomato, I can grow other things, too."
- 15 "How much did that tomato plant cost you?"
- 16 "Never mind. That's not the point." 50
- 17 The tomato is amazing. She dreads to eat it, but is delighted by the juiciness of the taste, so much richer than the flat, boring tomatoes she purchases at the grocery store. She starts contemplating the possibility of growing enough food to feed her family. She has a huge backyard. She could start a nice garden.
- 18 She could rear a few chickens and have eggs for protein. She could buy goats for milk. Imagine living off the land. She once had a boyfriend who lived off the land when she was in college. However, the only plant he was ever successful in cultivating was marijuana, the others ended up in failure resulting in his frequent visit to her house for meals. But maybe he didn't have her abilities. Maybe he didn't have her abilities. Maybe he didn't have her patience. 55
- 19 "What would you think if I quit my job?" she asks her husband. He knows how exhausted she has been, how stressful her work is. 60
- 20 Nevertheless, he says, "I'd think you lost your mind."
- 21 Margaret decides to purchase more plants. She will plant them and see what happens. If they grow, like the two-inch tomato, this will be a sign. She may have a black thumb, but she's good at reading signs. 65

(Adapted from <http://www.brightlightmultimedia.com>)

27. The expression *burned in the past* (line 12) suggests that Margaret
- Had learnt her lesson.
 - Envied her neighbours.
 - Failed in everything she does.
 - Did not have great gardening skills.
28. From paragraph 7 we can infer that
- Margaret was determined to grow tomatoes.
 - Margaret did not have Lady Luck on her side.
 - Margaret was resourceful in her methods.
 - Margaret was easily discouraged.
- I, II, III
 - I, III, IV
30. Why did Margaret want to preserve the tomato?
- To make it into a decoration.
 - To earn money from it.
 - To prevent it from decaying.
 - To commemorate her first home-grown food
31. Which of the following does not describe Margaret's behaviour?
- Idealist
 - Optimistic
 - Competitive
 - Sentimental

- C. II, III, IV
D. All of the above
29. The illustration in paragraph 8 is to highlight
A. The monsoon season.
B. Margaret's hectic life.
C. Margaret's forgetfulness.
D. The cat's indifferent attitude.
32. 'I'd think you lost your mind' suggests that Margaret's husband
A. Worries about her.
B. Does not believe her.
C. Disagrees with her idea.
D. Understands her pressure at work.
33. The writer's tone at the end of the story is
A. Doubtful
B. Sarcastic
C. Inspirational
D. Encouraging

Part 7

Read an article on microsleep
Answer questions 34 to 40.

- 1 Microsleep is a condition in which refers to short, brief episodes of sleep ranging from seconds up to a minute. It is momentary and uncontrollable as it most frequently occurs in situations where a person is trying to fight sleep and keep awake. I may occur while driving and drivers are usually unaware of these periods when microsleep occur. They may cruise along many metres with no control, which increases the risk of a serious car accident. 5
- 2 Insufficient sleep can lead to sleep deprivation, resulting in the experience of microsleep. Research indicates that even a single night of disturbed asleep will highly increase the occurrence of microsleep. The human biological clock is programmed in body and mental functions to be active in the day and rest at night, which makes us day oriented. It is nature's way and it is impossible for our biological rhythm to be altered to be fully alert at night and be well-rested during the day because the human body is controlled by the pattern of the light and dark. Microsleep in individuals may be an indicator of certain sleep disorders or the possibility of them being shift workers. The prior leads to fragmentation of the states of sleep and wakefulness. While the latter throws off regular snoozing patterns, messing with the normal circadian rhythms that most people have , which both ensue poor quality sleep. 10
- 3 It is not just fatigue from a disturbed night's rest that causes our brains to check out and not be able to do anything. Microsleep is also closely related with conducting boring, monotonous tasks. Sometimes boredom can trigger drowsiness, even if you're well rested. This is especially the case during dawn and dusk, during the mid-afternoon or late at night. These are the times when our circadian rhythms naturally dip into drowsy territory. 15
- 4 While it can be harmless if the occurrence happens on your couch while you are trying to remain awake for a movie, episodes of microsleep can also be extremely perilous. Having it to occur at the wrong time, such as when a person is driving, will dramatically impair driving skills and the ability to have quick reflexes on the road, causing accidents involving cars or heavy machinery as well as other dangerous situations. Studies have shown that fatigue impairs visual abilities as individuals who are sleep-deprived blink more and longer and they also display a more 20 25

scattered gaze and fixation patterns. All these evidence are found in the driving patterns of those who suffer from insufficient sleep, which clearly show a reduction in visual attention necessary for the drivers to drive safely. Sleep-deprived people veer out of the lane three times more often and the frequency increases the longer they drive. Falling asleep behind the wheel, even momentarily, is gravely dangerous as it can lead to potential injury to the driver and other road users or even road fatalities. 30

5 Microsleep is often the direct result of sleep deprivation. Thus, to reduce the possibility of microsleep, sleep deprivation has to be eliminated. It is significant sleep to satisfy your sleep needs. Adults require at least seven to nine hours of sleep each night. Besides sleeping more, the improvement of the overall sleep efficiency is an effective way to eliminate sleep deprivation. 35

6 Fortunately, there are an ambulance of ways to improve sleep efficiency. One great way is to eliminate all potential distractions when sleeping. Abstain from having the television on, or playing music while in bed. If you have the habit of having the music or television on, you should work to change it. It is best to sleep in quite, dark and peaceful atmosphere. All lights should be off, especially the bright, blinking lights. Cut off from looking at your handphone while in bed as the bright lights emitted from the screen tend to stimulate the brain and keep it awake. 40

7 Quality sleep each night helps you to function throughout the day and not feel fatigued. However, when carrying out repetitive tasks, like driving long distances, operating heavy machinery or just working on eight-hour shift of data entry, take short breaks. During these short breaks, you switch what you are doing for a few minutes every half-hour or so. Such actions stimulate different parts of the brain to reduce the monotony. Moving around during the break to exercise by stretching your body or legs pumps the blood flow, as being physically active wakes up the body to fight sleepiness. If you dislike moving about then start and engage in a lively conversation with someone near you. Participating in conversations forces you to pay attention to the details of the discussion and increases oxygen in your bloodstream. On the other hand, if you are alone, then you may opt to take a short nap to recharge your brain or turn up the tunes of upbeat music to lift your mood and be more alert for a longer period of time. 45 50

(Adapted from <https://bettersleep.org/blog>)

34. In paragraph 2, the writer develops his points mainly by
- A. Citing examples
 - B. Quoting research
 - C. Stating the evidence
 - D. Elaboration sleeping patterns.
35. The following are causes of microsleep except
- A. Working shifts.
 - B. Poor quality of sleep.
 - C. Irregular sleeping patterns.
 - D. Conducting mundane tasks.
38. the word *monotony* (line 48) can be best replaced with
- A. Dullness
 - B. Simplicity
 - C. Sluggishness
 - D. Dissimilarity
39. which of the following is true about microsleep?
- A. Microsleep is harmless.
 - B. Microsleep happens unknowingly.
 - C. Microsleep helps to recharge the brain.
 - D. Microsleep is a result of only prolonged insufficient sleep.

36. ...*to check out* (line 16) means
- A. To give up.
 - B. To go crazy.
 - C. To stop functioning.
 - D. To need medical attention.
37. What is the main idea of paragraph 4?
- A. The dangers of microsleep.
 - B. Tired people should not drive.
 - C. Sleep deprivation and its effects.
 - D. Microsleep can occur anytime and anywhere.
40. According to the text we can conclude that
- A. It is important to have good quality sleep.
 - B. Exercise is needed to prevent microsleep.
 - C. Microsleep can be overcome through various methods.
 - D. The main cause of microsleep is insufficient rest time.