

# The Long Nap

by RV Staff Writer E.T.

Ella thought she was too old for naps, but one day she just couldn't help herself.

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Ella never liked to take naps. When she was a baby, she would stay wide awake all afternoon, playing with toys in her crib. Her mother told her that Ella could only sleep when it was dark outside, no matter how dark and thick the curtains were in her room.

By the time Ella was in second grade at Sally Ride Elementary School, she couldn't remember the last time she had taken a nap. Ella slept very well at night, but she believed very strongly that naps were for babies and sick people.

But even when Ella was sick, she read a book in bed instead of sleeping.

One day, Ella came home from school feeling quite odd. Her legs were heavy, and her back ached. Her hands felt cold, but when she touched her cheeks, they seemed hot. She felt like she had just run a long race, even though all she did was walk the one block home from school, just as she did every afternoon.

Ella dropped her backpack and yawned loudly. Her mother looked up from the newspaper. "Ella, are you feeling alright? You don't look well." She placed a hand on Ella's forehead. "You might be coming down with something."

"I don't think I'm sick," said Ella.

"Well, I think you should rest in bed this afternoon. Be sure to stay warm under a blanket," Ella's mother said.

Ella rolled her eyes. She did not need a nap! Still, Ella did as she was told and slowly walked up the stairs to her bedroom.

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Ella sat on her bed and picked up a comic book. She figured she would read until it was time for dinner, but when she opened the book, she couldn't focus on the words. All the colors in the pictures seemed to swirl together.

"Maybe I'll rest my eyes for a bit," Ella thought.

When Ella opened her eyes again, her bedroom was dark. She opened the door and looked out into the hall. "Mom?" she called. But no one answered. The whole house was quiet, and all the lights were off.

Ella carefully walked downstairs and turned on the kitchen light. She looked at the clock on the wall. It was 11:30! "I must have been tired after all," thought Ella. She realized that she had slept all afternoon. She had missed dinner, and now her mother must be in bed sleeping.

"I guess I needed a nap after all," thought Ella as she made her way back upstairs to bed.

## Questions

1. What does Ella's mother mean when she says that Ella "might be coming down with something"?
2. What are some signs that Ella is sick?
3. What is Ella trying to read when she falls asleep?
4. Do you like to take naps? Why or why not?