The Child Sleeps

Mary Smith*
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Abstract

Sandra sleeps. Her heavy lids finally gave up the struggle and remained closed...
"Good bye, Mike."
There he goes. What if you don't have a date for this Saturday night, like you told him? It won't hurt you to stay at home and improve your mind. Besides, Mike isn't the right kind of guy for a sweet young girl.

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SANDRA sleeps. Her heavy lids finally gave up the struggle and remained closed. The clean, glowing face, tan from the warm sun, is freed from the problems of the child's world. Damp curls have worked their way out of the tight pigtails. Pigtails—today she lost her yellow ribbon, yesterday her red. Rubber bands will break, and boys in kindergarten will pull the "paint brushes."

A clean hand falls between the rails of the white bed—the same grubby little hand that brought home the first violet, the colored picture of the flowers from school, the favorite rock from the sand pile, and the bursting green bud from the mock orange bush. It's the same little hand that picked out the notes of the song on the piano—the new songs today about the fuzzy bear and about the birds in the spring and the familiar songs heard over the radio. It's the same little hand that was painted with mercurochrome to ease the pain of a scratch. The color helped so much.

The sturdy round legs are stretched to the extent of the bed. They are worn out from following the bigger kids whose legs are longer and faster. She will tag along, reminding them at intervals to "wait for me, you guys."

The corners of her mouth turn up in a slight smile. Pleasant dreams about flowers, music, school, dolls, sand pile—who can tell. She sleeps unconscious of anyone watching, for tomorrow is another busy day.