



A very important sleep

Have you ever noticed that, when you really NEED to go sleep, like on the night before a school exam, or your appearance in a school play, you feel wide awake? That's how the Mayor of Squaretown felt the other night. He was tossing and turning and, with every minute that passed, getting himself more and more worked up.

The Mayor of Squaretown is very, very important – at least he thinks so. He is a VIP (which stands for Very Important Person). And VIPs, as everyone knows, think they can do whatever they want, whenever they want and everyone else has to bow and scrape around them while they do it. What the Mayor wanted now, more than anything, was to fall asleep. He was absolutely furious when he couldn't.

You see the Mayor had a VIE (Very Important Event) to go to in the morning and he wanted to be at his best. He was going to unveil a brand-new public statue. It had been carved in secret and no-one, except the Mayor and the artist who made it, knew who the statue was. There would be crowds. A long speech would need to be made. And he had even arranged for free doughnuts (well free to him at least).

The Mayor was very fond of doughnuts. VIPs, he always said, deserved VIDs (Very Important Doughnuts). It was all very exciting. So exciting that now, when he really, really, really needed to get a good night's sleep, he couldn't.

As he lay in bed staring impatiently at the ceiling he thought about dogs.

"How is it that dogs can fall asleep almost instantly, anywhere, anytime? As long as there's a little space in which to lie down or curl up, they're ready to snooze. Why can dogs do that and Mayors can't? It's not fair!"

Then he started thinking about cats. Cats were even lazier than dogs. At least dogs went for walks and chased balls. Cats just ate and slept, as far as he could see.

"Why can cats go to sleep whenever they want and Mayors can't? It's not fair!"

He decided to try counting sheep. One, two, three, four...but then he started getting cross again. **"If I was a sheep in a field full of other sheep, I'd be snoring by now. Why can sheep sleep and not Mayors. It's unfair. I'm a VIP!"**

The mayor decided to get up and have a warm, soothing bath. He had a huge bathtub with gold taps in a marble-floored bathroom. He poured in lots of bubble bath and sat on the floor waiting for the enormous bath to fill up. When he saw the bubbles beginning to peep over the rim of the bath, he took off his jimmies, picked up his favourite rubber duck and jumped in.

"AAAAAAAAAAAARGHH!" he yelled.

Poor Mayor! In his hurry, he'd forgotten to turn on the hot tap, the bath was full to the brim with cold water. The mayor leaped back out of the bath, blue and shivering and even more furious.

"I'M A VIP!" He yelled at the top of his voice.

"Keep the noise down! It's the middle of the night!" Shouted a voice from across the street.

"Some of us have got to work tomorrow!" yelled another.

"HOW DARE YOU! I'M A VIP!" shouted the Mayor, leaning out of the window.

"A pain in the backside more like!" shouted back the voice from across the street.

Shivering and cross, the mayor went back to bed. He could already hear the birds starting up their dawn chorus. His night was ruined. Funnily enough though, the moment his head touched the pillow, he finally got what he'd been wishing for the whole night.

“Stop snoring!” Shouted the voice from across the street. But the exhausted Mayor didn’t even notice.

The next morning a crowd was gathered in front of the mysterious statue covered by the blue silk sheet. Everyone was wondering who it could be. Whoever it was must be very important, because the statue had cost a fortune.

Squarehead, Hairy Scary and Chinwag had got there especially early and were right at the front. It seemed as though almost everyone in Squaretown was there. Everyone, except one particular VIP.

“Where’s the Mayor?” Asked Square Ness cycling up on her bicycle.

“Where’s the Mayor?” Asked the officials standing by the podium where the Mayor was supposed to give his speech.

“Where’s the Mayor?” Asked people in the crowd.

“Has anyone seen the Mayor?” Asked the town clerk.

“We can’t start without the Mayor!”

At the same moment, Chinwag, who wanted to go for a walk, grabbed hold of a corner of the blue silk sheet and gave it an impatient tug. The sheet slid smoothly off the enormous, mystery statue and everyone gasped...

“There he is!” Said Squarehead.

And he was right – there in front of them, carved in bronze, twenty feet tall, and looking very self-important was the Mayor.

“Typical!” said a voice in the crowd.

But the Mayor wasn’t bothered. Not one bit.

He was at home enjoying a VIS (Very Important Sleep!).

