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"If you can't sleep, try lying on the end of the bed, then you might drop off"

Mark Twain (himself an insomniac)

"I reached for sleep and drew it round me like a blanket muffling pain and thought together in the merciful dark."

Mary Stewart.

"I fell asleep reading a dull book and dreamed I kept on reading, so I awoke from sheer boredom."

Heinrich Heine.

"How do people go to sleep? I'm afraid I've lost the knack. I might try busting myself smartly over the temple with the night-light. I might repeat to myself, slowly and soothingly, a list of quotations beautiful from minds profound; if I can remember any of the damn things."

Dorothy Parker.

"Ralph had begun to discover...that everyone...apparently had a pet remedy for insomnia, some bit of bedtime magic that had been handed down through the generations like the family Bible."

"His list of sure-fire, never-miss folk remedies continued to grow, and it had occurred to him more than once that he could write an amusing little book on the subject...if, that was, he ever got enough sleep to make organized thinking possible again."

Stephen King, "Insomnia"

People often don't like to see a doctor about insomnia, because they think they are likely to encounter disinterest or a desire to interpret the situation in the cold grey light of depression or the lurid harshness of anxiety.

King's character in his novel ran the gamut of various attempts, becoming ever more desperate, but all the while avoiding seeing a doctor. He even visited a chemist in a neighbouring town to order sleeping tablets rather than his local pharmacist seeing him.

A German study found that only 46% of chronic insomniacs had discussed the problem with a physician. Only 5% of patients had sought help specifically for insomnia. The rest had presumably consulted the doctor on some other pretext.

"If the drugstore version of newt's eye and toad's tongue didn't work, he really would go to the doctor."