The Mood Ring

Judy Moody ate one, two, three bowls of cereal. No prize. She poured four, five, six bowls of cereal. Nothing. Seven. Out fell the Mystery Prize. She ripped open the paper wrapper.

A ring! A silver ring with an oogley centre. A mood ring! And a little piece of cardboard.

WHAT MOOD ARE YOU IN? it asked.

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Judy slid the ring onto her finger. She pressed her thumb to the oogley centre. She squeezed her eyes tight. One one-thousand, two one-thousand, three one-thousand. She hoped the ring was purple. Purple was the best. Purple was *Joyful, On Top of the World.*

At last, she dared to look. Oh no! She couldn't believe her eyes. The ring was

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black. She knew what black meant, even without the directions. Black said *Grouchy, Impossible*. Black was for a bad, mad mood!



Maybe I counted wrong, thought Judy. She closed her eyes and pressed the ring again. She thought only good thoughts this time. Happy thoughts.

She thought about the time she and Rocky and Frank put a fake hand in the toilet to play a trick on Stink. She thought about the time she got a picture of her elbow in the newspaper. She thought about the time Class 3T collected enough bottles to plant trees in the rainforest. She thought of purple things. Socks and rocks and Popsicles.

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Judy Moody opened her eyes.

She flunked! The ring was still black.

Could the mood ring be wrong? Judy did not think rings could lie. Especially rings with directions.

Judy froze her thumb on an ice cube and pressed the ring's centre. Black.

She ran her thumb under hot water and pressed it again. Black, black, blacker than black. Not one teeny bit purple.

I guess I'm in a bad mood and don't even know it, thought Judy. What could I be mad about?

Judy Moody went looking for a bad mood.

She found her dad outside, planting fall flower bulbs.

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"Dad," she said, "will you take me to Fur & Fangs?"

Judy hated when her dad was too busy to take her to the pet store. She could already feel the bad mood coming on.

"Sure," said Dad. "Just let me rinse my hands."

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"Really?" asked Judy.

"Really."

"But you look really busy. And I have homework."

"It's OK," said Dad. "I'm about finished. I'll just wash my hands and we'll go."

"But what about my homework?"

"Do it after dinner," said Dad.

"Never mind," said Judy.

"Huh?" asked her dad.

Judy Moody went looking for an even better bad mood.

It really bugged her when her mum told her to brush her hair. So Judy took out her ponytails on purpose. Her hair stuck out in *T. rex* spikes. Her bangs fell over her eyes.

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She found her mum reading in the pink chair.

"Hi, Mum."

Her mum smiled at her. "Hi, honey."

"Aren't you going to say anything?" Judy asked.

"Like what?"

"Like, 'Go brush your hair. Get your hair out of your eyes. Your hair looks like a *T. rex*.' Anything."

"It's from the ponytails, honey. It'll be fine after you wash it tonight."

"But what if somebody came to our house and knocked on the door right this very second?" Judy asked.

"Like who? Rocky?" asked Mum.

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"No, like the president of the United States," Judy said.

"Tell the president you'll be right down. Then run upstairs and brush your hair."

It was no use. Judy Moody had to find Stink. If anybody could put her in a bad mood, Stink could. The baddest.

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Upstairs, Judy barged right into Stink's room without knocking.

"Stink! Where's all my doctor stuff?"

"What doctor stuff? I don't have any."

"But you always have my doctor stuff."

"You told me to stop taking everything."

"Do you have to listen to everything I say?" asked Judy.

Judy glared at her ring. "This mood ring lies." She yanked it off and threw it into the trash.

Stink fished the ring out of the trash. "A mood ring? Cool!" He tried on the ring. It turned black. Bat-wing black.

"See?" said Judy. "Worthless!"

Stink pressed his thumb to the oogley

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centre. The ring turned green! Green as a turtle's neck. Green as a toad's belly.

Judy could not believe her eyes. "Let me see that," she said. It was green all right. "Stink, you can give me back my mood ring now."

"You threw it in the trash," Stink told her, waving his mood-ring hand in front of her. "It's mine now."

"Yuck! Green looks like pond scum."

"Does not!"

"Green means jealous. Green means green with envy. Green means you wish you were me."

"Why would I wish that? You don't have a mood ring," said Stink.

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"C'mon, Stinker. I went through seven bowls of cereal for that ring. I gave up going to Fur & Fangs for that ring. I froze and burned myself for that ring."

"It's still mine," said Stink.

"ROAR!" said Judy.



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