She, Judy Moody, was in a mood. A sour-ball mood. A mad-face mood. All because school photos had come home that day.

If Stink came into her room, he would ask to see her school picture. And if he asked to see her school picture, he would see that she had been wearing her *I AM GIRL, HEAR ME ROAR* T-shirt. (The same one she wore today.) And if he saw her wearing her ROAR T-shirt in her school
photograph, he would also see that she looked like Sasquatch. With bird’s-nest hair in her face and in her eyes.

Mum and Dad were going to freak. “Just once we’d like to have a nice school photo of our girl,” Dad had said just this morning.

“Maybe this will be the year,” Mum had said.

But third grade was no different.

Judy spread out her school pictures on the floor. She looked like:

A clown (Kindergarten)

A one-eyed pirate (Second grade)

A boy (First grade)

Sasquatch (Third grade)
If only Mum and Dad would forget about school photos this year. Fat chance. Maybe Judy could pretend the dog ate them! Too bad the Moodys didn’t have a dog. Only Mouse the cat. She could say that an evil school-photo bandit erased them from the master computer. Hardly.

To make things worse, Rocky had grabbed her Sasquatch picture in class and wouldn’t give it back. Then he passed it to Frank, which made Judy yelp and jump up out of her seat instead of doing her maths. That’s when Mr Todd said the A word.

_Antarctica._
The desk at the back of the room where Judy had to go to chill out. For the third time that day! Never in the History of Judy had she been to Antarctica that many times in a row.

A doughnut-sized sicky spot sat in her stomach just remembering it.

That’s why she, Judy Moody, was in a mood. A finger-knitting, don’t-think-about-school-photographs, need-to-be-alone mood. As in by herself. As in no stinky little brother to bug and bother her like a pesky mosquito. Bzzz! Stink was always in her ear.

Judy’s Number One Favourite Place to curl up with Mouse was on her top bunk, but Stink would for-sure find her there.
She crawled over gobs of flip-flops and blobs of dirty clothes to her second favourite spot to be alone – the very back of her wardrobe. She popped a wad of Stink’s yard-long bubblegum in her mouth.

“Don’t look at me like that, Mouse. What Stink doesn’t know won’t hurt him.”

She picked up a skein of grey-brown wool and looped it around her thumb. Mouse batted the finger-knitting chain with her paw.

Over. Under. Over. Under. Back. Loop-de-loop-de-loop. Judy tugged on the long chain of apple-green wool that dangled from her left hand. Her fingers flew. She, Judy Moody, was the fastest finger knitter in Frog Neck Lake, Virginia. The fastest
finger knitter in the east. Probably the fastest in the whole wide world!

Finger knitting was the greatest – no knitting needles needed. She looped the wool over her fingers, one, two, three, four, back, over, under, through ... just like Grandma Lou had taught her during the big blackout of Hurricane Elmer.

Judy’s wardrobe was like a secret little room all to herself. It even had a window. A small, round window just like the kind they had on ships. Sailing ships. Pirate ships.

*The ship sailed across the blue ocean, bobbing on the waves under a sky full of marshmallow clouds. Judy and Mouse rocked back and forth as the ship’s hammock swung*
in the breeze. Until the ship hit a giant wave and...

Mouse overboard!

Judy tossed her chain of knitting to Mouse. She felt a tug on the line. It was—
“Stink!” Judy snapped out of her day-dream. Her gum went flying. “You scared the bubblegum out of me!”

“Where’d you get that gum?” asked Stink.

“Nowhere. It’s ABC gum.” She picked it up and popped it back in. “How’d you find me, anyway?”

“I followed the trail of wool.”

The long, colourful chain of finger knitting snaked across the bottom of her wardrobe, climbed up and over piles of books and towers of toys, wound around Sock Mountain and crept out the door.

“Well, bad idea. I’m in a mood.”

“How was I supposed to know?”

“Clues one, two and three: those
“Doohickeys that hang on the doorknob?”

“Oh. I thought you were going to say school photos.”

“That too.”

“Somebody’s in a mood.”

“Bingo!”

“Can I help it if I don’t go around reading doorknobs?”

“I have an idea,” said Judy. “Mum read me a book about Louisa May Alcott—”

“Louisa May Who?”

“She’s only the most famous author of the most famous book in the world, Little Women.”

“Cool. Is it about miniature people?”
And do they live in matchboxes and take baths in thimbles and stuff? And do they know the Borrowers?”

“N-O! Anyhow, it’s a known fact that Louisa May had a lot of moods. Ask anyone. So she had this sausage pillow.”

“ Weird.”

“A sausage pillow is a long skinny pillow. When it was standing up on end it meant she was happy and in a good mood – *Come on in*. But when it was lying down on its side, hoo boy, look out – *Do not disturb*, Louisa May was in a mood.”

Judy looked around and grabbed a fuzzy pillow. “See this pillow? This will be my mood pillow. It’ll be our signal. If the pillow’s sitting up, it means *I’m in a good..."
mood. Come on in. But if it’s lying down – Bad mood. Go away. Much better than a doorknob doohickey.”

“But what if the pillow was standing up and the window was open and a hurricane came and super-high winds blew down the pillow and knocked it on its side? Or what if a giant monster bigger than King Kong came and picked up our house and shook it like a toothpick and the pillow fell over?”

“Fine.” Judy plucked a marker pen from her pencil case. She set the pillow in her lap. On one side, she drew a happy face for good mood. On the other side, she drew a frowny face for bad mood.

“This will be my mood pillow. Happy
face means Come on in. Frowny face means Go away.” Judy leaned the pillow against the wall – frowny face out. “The pillow has spoken, Stink.”

Stink made a face. “I get it. I get it. All I really wanted was to ask if I could use your markers.”

“In the pencil case, Stinkerbell.”

“I’m making a T-shirt for Backwards Day tomorrow.”

Backwards Day! Backwards Day was only Judy’s favourite day of the whole entire year, next to April Fools’ Day (her birthday) and Wear Purple for Peace Day.
Judy turned that mood pillow right around. The pillow smiled.

She had an idea for Backwards Day too. A way-good idea. A not-bad-mood idea.