

That's the Way I Like It

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That's the Way I Like It

Chapter 1 The Mudd Family

Bob and Jan Mudd had a pretty big family. Well, quite big. Bob and Jan had six children. That's a big family!

Well, if you have fifteen children, six is small! On the other hand, if you have only one child, six is huge!



At the time of this story, their son Dave was fifteen. He was in grade ten at school. He worked hard. He liked hockey, basketball and girls. He liked clean T-shirts and dirty socks. He liked mashed potatoes and meatballs. He didn't like green beans.

Diane was fourteen and in grade nine. Diane took piano lessons. She didn't like to play the piano. Every day her mom had to tell Diane over and over to play the piano. They were both tired of it! At school Diane liked music, math and boys. Boys most of all! Diane liked baked potatoes and ham. She didn't like corn.

Don was twelve. He was in grade seven. He didn't like grade seven. He didn't like anything about school except recess! Don would eat anything. The only thing he didn't like about food was when it was all gone!

Ten-year-old Dale was in grade five. Dale loved school and everything about it. Dale loved reading and doing projects. He loved computers. He had no time for food. The family had to tell him when it was time to eat!

Dick was eight and small for his age. Sometimes people thought Dick and his sister, Dolly, were twins. Dick didn't like that at all! Grade three was fun for Dick. He liked science most of all. He liked to find out how things work. Dick liked playing hockey with his big brother, Dave. When it came to food, Dick didn't like many things. Sometimes if he could, he ate only bread and butter for supper.

Dolly was five. "Dolly" was a good name for her because she looked like a little doll. She didn't like looking like a doll. Even more, she didn't like being little. She didn't like being the little one in the family. She liked school, but she didn't like to work hard. She didn't want to work hard at school or at home. She liked people to do things for her. Dolly liked to play with friends. She liked to ask friends over for supper. Dolly liked most foods. She didn't like potatoes or gravy.

Chapter 2 A Big Problem

The Mudds had a problem. It was a big problem. Maybe it was even a huge problem.

They complained. Every hour of the day, and some of the night, they complained. They complained about little things. They complained about big things. They complained about everything in between little and big things.

The oldest child, Dave, complained that the hockey season was too short. He complained if he didn't have a clean T-shirt to wear. He complained when his mom told him to change his socks. He complained every time he saw green beans.

Next in line, Diane, complained about playing the piano. She wished pianos and corn would just go away! She wished she could have boys, baked potatoes and ham every day!

Don complained about going to school. He said the school day was too long. He said recess was too short. He complained at supper time. He complained if he couldn't have more of everything.

Dale complained that the school day was too short. He complained that his classroom didn't have enough books and computers. He complained that he had to sit at the supper table. He wanted to get some food, and run off to the computer.

Eight-year-old Dick complained about being so small for his age. He really complained when people thought he was Dolly's twin! He complained when his mom said he had to eat a little of everything! He complained if his dad said he would never grow if he didn't eat!

Dolly complained about being the smallest. She often said she never got to do anything because she was too little. She complained if she had to work hard at something. She complained every time she saw potatoes.



Mornings at the Mudd's were terrible. Dave shouted, "Somebody took my socks! Who has my clean T-shirt?"

Diane yelled, "Somebody put Dave's dirty socks on my bed! They smell bad. Dave, come and get your socks."

Don said, "It's too early to get up! I don't want to get ready for school. School is boring! I hate mornings!"

Dale said, "I don't want breakfast. Why can't I just take an apple and go to school? I'm working on a big project in my classroom. The teacher said I could come in early."

Dick shouted, "Breakfast? I don't even feel like eating. Why do I have to eat breakfast? I want to read my science notes before school. Why can't I skip breakfast? Breakfast is boring."

Dolly whined, "I don't feel like getting up. I don't feel like getting dressed by myself. Mornings make me sick. I need heeeeeeeelp!"

It was terrible! The complaints went on and on!

"Diane won't let me into the bathroom!" said one.

"Dave took my towel," said another.

"Oooooo! There's toothpaste on the toilet seat!" said another.

There were complaints all through breakfast.

"My toast is too black!"

"The butter is too hard!"

"There isn't enough milk!"

"Dick is putting his arm on my place!"

"Dolly is whining again!"

Chapter 3 A Family Meeting

Bob and Jan were tired of the complaining. They were sick of it. They couldn't take it any more.

Bob and Jan put their heads together. They talked a little. They thought a little. They talked and thought some more. "I think we've got it," Bob said.

That night after supper, Bob said to the children, "We are having a family meeting. Your mother and I are tired of the complaints! We are sick, sick, sick of all the complaining! It has to stop!"

The children looked at their dad. He had that look on his face. That look told them they had better listen!.

The children looked at their mom. Oh, no! She had that look on her face, too. That look told them to sit still! That look told them not to talk. That look told them they had better listen!



Dad said, "There is too much complaining. It puts everybody into a bad mood for the day. We are all unhappy when we leave the house in the morning. We're going to tell you how it's going to be from now on."

Mom said, "We all complain a lot. We don't think about what we are going to say, we just say it. Before we know it, a complaint comes out, and it's too late to zip it back into our mouths."

Dad went on, "That's right. When the complaint is out, we can't get it back, so we have to fix it some other way."

Mom said, "So every time you feel a complaint going out, be ready to say, 'but that's the way I like it!'"

Dad said, "Let me show you how this works. If you say, 'The toast is too black', you have to add, 'but that's the way I like it!'"

That made Dave laugh. "That's crazy," he said.

"If that's a complaint, you'd better fix it," said Diane.

Dave laughed. "All right," he said, "the toast is too black, but that's the way I like it!"

Dolly giggled. Dave smiled. They felt better right away!

Mom said, "If you say, 'Dick is putting bis ann in my place', what else should you say?"

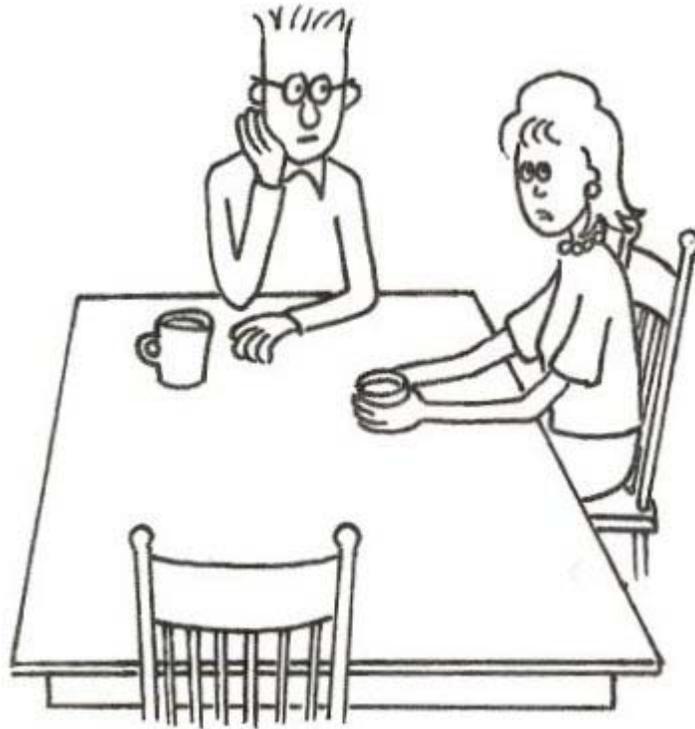
Dolly said, "Dick is putting bis arm in my place, but that's the way I like it!"

Dick looked at Dolly and said, "Dolly is whining again but that's the way I like it!"

Dave said, "If there are ants in my pants, do I have to say I like it?"

Everybody laughed.

Mom and Dad looked at the children and said, "Let's try it for a day and see how it goes."



The children were quiet the next morning. They went off to school. Bob looked at Jan and said, "Do you think it will work?"

Jan answered, "I hope so. If it doesn't, we did a lot of hard thinking for nothing!"

Chapter 4 That' s the Way I Like It!

Later that day, the family came back ta the house one by one. Mom said, "Diane, it's your turn to help with supper."

Diane looked angry. "Helping with supper is boring," she said.

Her mother gave her that look.

"Oh!" said Diane, "Helping with supper is boring, but that's the way I like it!"

Her mother smiled. Diane laughed. They both felt better.

When supper was ready, Mom called, "It's time for supper everybody!"

Everyone came running and sat down for supper. The children pushed each other out of the way so they could sit down first.

"Dale pushed me!" complained Dick, "Oh, but that's the way I like it!"

That made Dale laugh, and he said, "I'm sorry, Dickie!"

That made Dick laugh, and he felt better. So did Dale.

"Green beans!" said Diane. "Good. It's not corn. But if it was corn, I'd like it!"

Dick thought the bread was a little dry. He didn't say anything. He didn't want to say he liked dry bread!

Don said, "Oh, the potatoes are mashed again... but that's the way I like them!"

"Potatoes!" said Dolly. "We always have potatoes, but I guess that's the way I like it."

That made everybody laugh. Even Dad. Even Mom. Even Dolly.

As supper went on, the talking got loud. Then it got louder. "It's so loud in here, I can't hear myself think!" yelled Dad.

Seven pairs of eyes looked at Dad with that look! Dad rolled his eyes, and said, "It's loud in here, but that's the way I like it!"

That made everybody laugh. Even Dad.

"We're sorry for the noise," said Dave, "so cut it out everybody!"

The rest of the supper was a happy time. When supper was over, Mom asked, "Whose turn is it to do dishes?"

"I guess it's mine, and little Dolly is my helper. I guess that's the way I like it," said Dave.

"You mean I have to do dishes with him? Oh, that's the way I like it," Dolly giggled. "And I don't care if you call me 'little Dolly', because I like being little now!"

At bedtime, everybody was in a good mood. Don called to the others, "Don't forget in the morning everybody! That's the way you like it!"

In the morning, Jan woke up first. It was six o'clock. She poked Bob in the side. "It's six o'clock, sleepyhead!" she said.

"It's so early!" complained Bob.

Jan poked him in the side again. "Oh," he groaned, "It's so early, but that's the way I like it!"

Jan laughed, and jumped out of bed. "You sure are a sleepyhead in the morning, but that' s the way I like you!" she said.

That made Bob smile. "If that's the way you like me, why don't you come back to bed?" he said with a grin.

Just at that minute, there was a knock on the door. Diane yelled through the door, "Somebody put dirty socks on my bed, but that's the way I like it! I'll just throw them at Dave. I think they are his anyway!"

"Somebody took my clean socks, but that's the way I like it," laughed Dave, "I just got the dirty ones from Diane. I'll wear them!"

Don and Dale knocked at the same time. "It was too early to get up," said Don, "but that's the way I like it because I made Dale get up, too."

Dick knocked and said, "There were dirty things all over the bathroom floor, but that's the way I like it, because I made Dave pick them all up. They were his, and he said he liked picking them up!"

Dolly knocked and opened the door. "I'm very little to get up myself, but I did it anyway. I didn't want to miss the fun!" she said, then ran off to get ready for school.

Jan leaned over Bob.

"We have a busy, noisy family," she said, "but that's the way I like it. It makes me feel happy!"

"If you feel that happy," smiled Doug, "why don't you jump back into bed?"



Jan laughed. She kissed Bob's nose. "You're a crazy fool, Bob Mudd," she said, "but that's the way I like it!"

To Randy, who is always there
this book is not based on the lives
of specific people.