



Jennifer Murdley's Toad (Words Take Wing)

By Bruce Coville, Full Cast

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Jennifer Murdley's Toad (Words Take Wing) By Bruce Coville, Full Cast

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As if she didn't have trouble enough after her classmates discovered she has worn her brother's underwear to school (oh, the teasing, the humiliation!) Jennifer Murdley has just stumbled into Mr. Elives' Magic Shop, where she buys a toad named Bufo. Of course, the odds of buying a normal toad in that shop are zero, as Jennifer finds out when Bufo starts to talk to her.

As it turns out, talking is the least of the toad's strange talents. Before Jennifer's adventures with him are over, she will have to mend an ancient tragedy, save her little brother from being a toad himself, and (hardest of all) come face to face with the fact that in a world obsessed with beauty, she is anything but. At least, not on the outside...

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Jennifer Murdley's Toad (Words Take Wing) By Bruce Coville, Full Cast Bibliography

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- Running time: 145 minutes
- Binding: Audio Cassette

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This fanciful story questions the value of beauty yet spins out of control after a promising start. Jennifer, a fifth-grader, agonizes over her appearance--"I'm just a kid in the plain brown wrapper"--and her schoolmates' taunts are doubly painful. After purchasing a toad from a mysterious shopkeeper Jennifer is amazed to discover that not only can Bufo talk, he can mimic voices unerringly. At school the canny amphibian inflicts vengeance on Sharra, a nasty classmate. When a gorgeous witch kidnaps Jennifer's youngest sibling, her evil intentions are thwarted by teamwork--and by Jennifer's sacrifices that reveal qualities surpassing mere beauty. Coville's (Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher) comical classroom scenes lapse into a convoluted web involving Bufo's long-lost sweetheart and the belabored idea that pulchritude denotes cruelty; unattractiveness, humanity. The book's laudable message, however, is clearly delineated, and as kind, loyal Jennifer endures a poor self-image, one hopes readers will see the light. Ages 8-12.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 3-6--As is this series' pattern, a child who is having a problem runs away and finds herself in the magic shop with Mr. Elives. Jennifer believes she is ugly and has trouble making friends. Wanting a pet, she buys Bufo, a toad hatched years before from the mouth of a witch who spewed out frogs, snakes, and other nasty items. He has spent his recent life looking for his lost love, another toad. Naturally, he helps Jennifer see her in herself. In the process, she, her brother, and a school enemy are all turned into toads. Meanwhile, the witch is out to find Bufo. It all gets somewhat confusing, but as in earlier books, an adult steps in, and all turns out for the best. Very similar in plot to Coville's *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher* (HBJ, 1991), the story moves well, with realistic characterizations. Fans of Coville's earlier books will probably like this as well, especially when the children-cum-toads discover their appetite for bugs. The black-and-white illustrations go well with the text, featuring an expressive toad and an unattractive Jennifer and witch. The theme of inner beauty is particularly well handled for this age group.

-Margaret C. Howell, *West Springfield Elementary School, VA*

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From Kirkus Reviews

Snagged immediately with "If Jennifer Murdley hadn't been forced to wear her brother's underpants to school, the whole thing might never have happened," readers will find this latest escapade featuring Mr. S. H. Elives and his quirky magic-shop endlessly funny. Painfully aware that she's plain, fourth-grade Jennifer endures underwear taunts all day before bolting from pretty, obnoxious Sharra Moncrieffe and friends into Elives's odd little store. The creature she buys there turns out to be a no-nonsense talking toad (Bufo) who does Bogie imitations and puts Sharra in her place. Chaos ensues. How Jennifer has the chance to become even prettier than Sharra and how a series of shape-changing spells are broken adds up to a roller-coaster ride of a story, full of humor and even wisdom. Coville's motley siblings, rivals, friends, and braggadocio Bufo all come alive in delicious banter and turns of phrase (a few gross ones, too). The author weaves in Jennifer's yearning to be beautiful from the first, ensuring that readers will identify with her anguished decision when she finally comes face to face with what she longs to be. An unusually felicitous blend of lighthearted wit and imaginative plotting. Illustrations not seen. (Fiction. 8-12) -- Copyright ©1992, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Shanika Jeans:

As people who live in often the modest era should be change about what going on or details even knowledge to make these individuals keep up with the era that is always change and move ahead. Some of you maybe will probably update themselves by studying books. It is a good choice in your case but the problems coming to you actually is you don't know which one you should start with. This Jennifer Murdley's Toad (Words Take Wing) is our recommendation so you keep up with the world. Why, since this book serves what you want and want in this era.

Wallace Long:

Now a day people that Living in the era wherever everything reachable by talk with the internet and the resources inside it can be true or not demand people to be aware of each data they get. How a lot more to be smart in obtaining any information nowadays? Of course the solution is reading a book. Looking at a book can help individuals out of this uncertainty Information specifically this Jennifer Murdley's Toad (Words Take Wing) book because this book offers you rich information and knowledge. Of course the info in this book hundred per cent guarantees there is no doubt in it you may already know.

Hope Giles:

Playing with family in a park, coming to see the water world or hanging out with buddies is thing that usually you might have done when you have spare time, and then why you don't try matter that really opposite from that. A single activity that make you not sense tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you already been ride on and with addition info. Even you love Jennifer Murdley's Toad (Words Take Wing), it is possible to enjoy both. It is good combination right, you still need to miss it? What kind of hangout type is it? Oh occur its mind hangout guys. What? Still don't understand it, oh come on its known as reading friends.

Jessie Davis:

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